

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY



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LANCASHIRE NONCONFORMITY;

OR,

SKETCHES, HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE,

OF THE

Congregational and Old Presbyterian Churches
in the County.

BY THE REV. B. NIGHTINGALE,

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Tockholes."*

* * * * *

THE CHURCHES OF MANCHESTER, OLDHAM,
ASHTON, &c.



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MANUEL



THIS VOLUME

OF

Nonconformist History

IS

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO THE

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS AND CHURCHES

WHOSE HISTORIES IT CONTAINS.

PREFACE.

EXACTLY four years have elapsed since the first prospectus of "Lancashire Nonconformity" was sent out to the public, and in Volumes V. and VI., now issued, the work receives its completion. Four years, however, do not by any means represent the amount of time consumed in its production; for when that first prospectus was issued a not inconsiderable proportion of the work was already written, and materials were in hand for much of the unwritten portion, all of which had been a labour of many years. It is, therefore, with no light sense of relief that I look upon the finished thing. Amidst the claims of a busy pastorate, in a town where Nonconformity, in all its forms, has no little difficulty in maintaining its ground, together with the prospect of serious financial loss, it has required some courage to "endure unto the end." The work has never lost interest for me during its progress; nor has the burden its weight. The possibility, however, of providing our churches with lessons, salutary and admonitory on the one hand, inspiring and encouraging on the other, and of contributing towards a quickened interest in their work, prevented me from beating a retreat, though the temptation to do so has been often present. "Lancashire Nonconformity" makes no great pretensions. It is a modest attempt to write a very interesting story, and all that the author can say for himself is that neither time, labour, nor expense has been spared that the story might be told correctly. Of the imperfections of the work no one is more conscious than myself. Early ideals have been realised to a very limited extent, and from the beginning it became evident that absolute accuracy was impossible. I cannot refrain from repeating a regret, expressed in earlier volumes, that our demoninational "organs" are so often and so seriously inaccurate. Our Year Books, Calendars, Magazines, &c., which in the case of many churches are the only available sources of information about their early history, manifest a supreme contempt for facts and figures; and the obituary notices of brethren departed are often written by those who evidently only "know in part." It will considerably lighten the labours of any future historian, and save him hours of anxiety and irritation, if our churches will see that,

as far as possible, only reliable information about themselves is printed, and especially that full and accurate records of their doings are kept. The character of the documents used in the production of the present work will in some measure explain any errors which it may be found to contain. In connection with this matter it may be added, that generally when a minister's name appears in successive volumes, and any difference in the accounts is detected, the latest information is the most accurate.

The present volume covers only a part of the Manchester District of the Lancashire Congregational Union, yet it has considerably outrun the number of pages at first intended. Some churches may be disappointed because their histories are not more full, but if they will note the number whose histories had to be inserted they will see that greater fulness was not possible. It has been stated repeatedly, in circulars and earlier prefaces, that each volume is complete in itself; but the pressure of space in the present one has compelled me, wherever possible, to ask the reader to consult other volumes for more details.

Congregationalism appears in its strength in the part of the county with which this volume deals. The quick, vigorous, and courageous spirit which centres in the great Cottonopolis of Lancashire, has shown itself in continuous aggressive Congregational effort. Whereas at the commencement of the century, when the Lancashire Congregational Union was born, there were barely half a dozen inconsiderable interests, now there is a large Congregational network in Manchester and neighbourhood, and many of the churches have both wealth, position, and numbers on their side. The story is not without incidents of a humiliating character, but on the whole it is full of encouragement, and it shows what great possibilities there are in Congregationalism, when it commands the loyalty of its own friends.

The pleasing duty remains of acknowledging the kindness of innumerable friends. Pastors and deacons of churches, almost without exception, have promptly replied to my inquiries, and placed at my disposal all necessary church documents. The Rev. R. M. Davies has continued the loan of the County Union Reports, at much inconvenience to himself; he has also given generous help in the collection of information about the Oldham Churches, and that in a year of unusual activity, and when the condition of his health made the lightening of his labours imperative. Drs. Hodgson and Thomson, of Manchester, also have supplied me with valuable information. The Rev. J. W. Kiddle has been most kind, and to him I am indebted for the historic outlines of three or four of the churches. G. H. Adshead, Esq., of Pendleton, who has interested himself in the work from its commencement, has sent me many documents from his valuable collection; and Mrs. Macfadyen has per-

mitted me the use of several manuscripts which the late Dr. Macfadyen, an enthusiast in Nonconformist history, had gathered together with pious care. The Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., and D. F. Howorth, Esq., F.S.A., of Ashton-under-Lyne, have been willing helpers; and the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College, has revised the proofs of several of the older foundations whose congregations are now Unitarian. The Rev. D. John, the respected pastor of the Booth Street Welsh Congregational Church, has written for me the story of Congregationalism amongst natives from the Principality, of whom Manchester contains not a few. The Rev. J. Barton Bell, of Ulverston, has again read the proofs of the whole volume; and the index is mainly the work of the two lady friends who assisted in a like capacity in a previous volume. To all these friends, and many more whose names are unmentioned, my warmest thanks are given.

I deem myself fortunate in being able to complete "Lancashire Nonconformity" in the Tercentenary year of British Congregationalism, in the Jubilee year of the Lancashire College, and in the Jubilee year of one of our most honoured ministers; and if, in conjunction with these events, the production of this work shall help to a quickened interest in our Congregational history, I shall not think the labour has been in vain.

BENJAMIN NIGHTINGALE.

Fishergate Hill, Preston,

September, 1893.

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LANCASHIRE NONCONFORMITY.

CHAPTER I.

ROUND ABOUT MANCHESTER

I.—MONTON CHAPEL.

AMONGST the two thousand ministers who suffered ejection by the Act of Uniformity, in 1662, was the Rev. Edmund Jones, B.A., vicar of Eccles Parish Church. His father was the Rev. John Jones, who was instituted to the vicarage of Eccles, January 9th, 1610-11, and Edmund Jones was born here in 1624. He was admitted into St. John's College, Cambridge, October, 1645, and ordained as his father's successor at Eccles, January 25th, 1649-50. After his ejection, Calamy says, he "preached in private, and when authority allowed it more publicly."¹ The Rev. John Angier, of Denton, in a diary now lost, says that Mr. Jones was arrested for his Nonconformity, October 8th, 1663, and the Rev. Henry Newcome, M.A., writes thus, under date August 16th, 1668 :—

I was told by a dear friend that certificates from the Bishop were granted against Mr. Jones and Mr. Martindale for preaching at Gorton, and that it was given out that a third should come out against me for preaching in my own house.²

It is clear from these statements that Mr. Jones, like most of the Nonconformists of that period, passed through many hard-

¹ "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 362.

² "Autobiography of Henry Newcome" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvii.), p. 171.

ships, which continued with little abatement until the date of his death, May 2nd, 1674. Calamy describes him as a man of "excellent abilities, and an able scholar, naturally very rhetorical."¹

To this may be added the testimony of Henry Newcome :—

May 3 [1674]. The news came to me (Lord's day, at dinner) of the death of my dear friend and brother in the work and patience of the Gospel, Mr. Edmund Jones, who died last night of a short sickness. A great breach it



ECCLES PARISH CHURCH.

is upon us. He was a true-hearted, serious man, and a faithful minister. The Lord awaken us. The next day, being May 4th, Mr. Tilsley preached at his funeral at Eccles an excellent sermon on 2 Tim., iv., 7, 8.²

Probably the people to whom Mr. Jones extended his occasional ministrations "in private," and "more publicly" when not prevented

¹ "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 362.

² "Autobiography of Henry Newcome" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvii.) p. 206. Much interesting information respecting the Rev. Edmund Jones and his father, John Jones, will be found in the Minutes of the Manchester Classis, recently published by the Chetham Society.

by the civil authorities, were some of his old congregation who had sympathy with his views ; at any rate about this time a Non-conformist congregation was accustomed to meet at Monks Hall,¹ in the neighbourhood of Eccles, having as pastor the Rev. Roger Baldwin, who had been ejected from Penrith in 1660, and Rainford, near St. Helens, in 1662. He continued until his death, June 19th, 1695, when he was succeeded² by the Rev. Thos. Crompton, M.A. Mr. Crompton was a native of Great Lever, near Bolton, being born there in 1634, and educated at Oxford University. He was minister at Toxteth Chapel, Liverpool, in 1657, and "after the Act of Uniformity took place he continued to enjoy the liberty of the public chapel, being some way privileged."³ His colleague at Liverpool for many years was the Rev. Michael Briscoe, formerly of Walmsley, near Bolton, whose sturdy Independency brought upon him many troubles. As already stated, Mr. Crompton took charge of the Congregation at Monks Hall⁴ on the death of Mr. Baldwin, but he was not permitted to hold it long. Death terminated his life and labours on September 2nd, 1699. Previous to this, however, Mr. Crompton and his people had built for themselves a place of worship at Monton, which even now is quite rural, and then must have been "an out-of-the-way and secluded" spot.⁵ The site was purchased in 1697, and the chapel, which cost £150, was probably erected in that or the following year. Mr. Crompton's successor was the Rev. Jeremiah Aldred, who was educated at the Rathmell Academy by the Rev. Richard Frank-

¹ The reader is referred to vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for a view of Monks Hall and a full account of Mr. Baldwin.

² Not immediately, for Oliver Heywood speaks of him as Thomas Crompton of Liverpool, in June, 1696 (Turner's "Yorkshire County Magazine" for January, 1893, p. 14).

³ Calamy's "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 378.

⁴ It appears that Oliver Heywood, on what proved to be his last visit to Lancashire, preached at Eccles on Wednesday, June 3, 1696. In a passage from his diary, which Hunter gives ("Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 388), he says that, accompanied by Dr. Neeld, "we preached in their meeting place, a large barn, to a full assembly ; sat with my Lord Willoughby afterwards ; then we went to Eccles Church ; dined and returned to Manchester." Was this barn at Monks Hall ? I think so.

⁵ "History of Monton Chapel." by the Rev. T. E. Poynting, p. 16.

land, and ordained at Attercliffe, September 11th, 1688. What charge he had previous to his coming to Monton I have not ascertained ;¹ but he continued here until his death in 1729. His tombstone in the chapel yard is thus inscribed :—

Here Lyeth the Body of y^e
Rev^d. IEREMIAH ALDRED late
Minister of this place, who
died August 26th 1729² in the 69th 2
year of his age. Also the
Body of Mary his wife who
died Sep. 30 1729² in the 69th 2
year of her age. Also y^e Body
of Ieremiah Aldred their son
who died Sep. 3rd 1727 in the
28th year of his age.³

It was during Mr. Aldred's ministry, in June, 1715,⁴ that Monton Chapel was wrecked by a Church and King mob, led by Tom

¹ In the Minutes of the United Brethren (Cheetham Society Series, vol. xxiv.) Mr. Aldred is mentioned as representing some place in the Bolton District from April, 1695, to April 1699. After that he appears as a member of the Manchester Classis.

² These are singular coincidences.

³ Miall, in his "Congregationalism in Yorkshire" (p. 375), gives the Rev. John Aldred as another of the Rev. Jeremiah Aldred's sons, who was in the ministry for some time at Wakefield, in Yorkshire. The Rev. Ebenezer Aldred, who died at Sheffield, October 25, 1822, aged seventy-seven years, was the son of the Rev. John Aldred and grandson of the Rev. Jeremiah Aldred. He was for many years a Dissenting minister in Derbyshire.

⁴ There is still in existence an imperfect MS. containing the depositions of several persons respecting the Monton riots, amongst them being that of the minister of Monton Chapel. It reads as follows :—

Jeremy Aldred of Mouton in the County of Lanc., clerke, aged 55 years, being sworn and exa'ied, saith that since his Ma'tyes accession to throne and before the first of Aug^t 1715 to witt, on the 13th and twenty first day of June in that year this depont was p'sent and did see a number of people, being forty or more in number the latter time, and a hundred or two the former time who came in a riotous and tumultuous maner to the Chappell or meeting house in Mouton, used for divine worship by protestant dissenters, and at those times . . . the seats, pews, a great part of the walls, and the slate

Syddall, who was subsequently hanged. The congregation says Mr. Poynting received by way of compensation from the Government "£140, repaired their chapel, and placed the present oak pews and pulpit in it. There is a tradition that the bell was thrown by a member of the congregation into a neighbouring pit or pool, whence it was afterwards fished up."¹ Mr. Aldred was the intimate friend of Matthew Henry, who joined with his congregation in requesting him to be his successor at Chester, but after "much serious deliberation and prayer the application was negatived."² The congregation at this time was one of the largest Nonconformist gatherings in the county, numbering 612 persons, of whom twenty-nine were county voters.

Mr. Aldred was succeeded almost immediately by the Rev. John Chorley, connected, I imagine, with the Chorley family, of Preston, and so with the Rev. Josiah Chorley, M.A., for many years minister of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich. For some time he was tutor to the family of Sir Robert Dukinfield, and this led to his marrying Jane Dukinfield, the daughter of Sir Robert. His ordination took place in 1730, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Messrs. Knight, Jones, and Mottershead. It is supposed that he inclined towards Arianism, and so led the way for the greater theological changes which were eventually to appear in

and rooffe of the said meeting house, and most of the other parts of the walls which were left standing, were soe shaken that they were afterwards forced to be taken downe. This depon^t saith he was not an Eye-witnesse or spectator whilst all the said damages were done; but is well assured that thesame was done by the said Rioters, for that he mett them as they were going thither the former time, and would have p'vailed with them to returne back, but could not; and this Depont actually saw them com'tting part of the said dam'ages the latter of the said times. He saith the Riotters at the former time took away severall arms and goods, the value whereof (besides . . . aind) were by the best computac'on worth 7^{li} 17^s 4^d, and that the ex . . . order to get those goods againe came to 3^{li} 15^s 3^d; the charges of guarding the said meeting house came to 7^{li} 8^s 4^d; and the charges of prosecuteing . . . se Rioters (besides a bill of costs to Mr. John Richardson & Mr. Parr) came to 5^{li} 14^s . . . and the said Mr. Richardson and Mr. Parrs bill amounts to 4^{li} 15^s.—Signed JER : ALDRED.—(Copied from "The Palatine Note Book" for Nov., 1882, p. 242).

¹ "History of Monton Chapel," p. 20.

² "Manchester Socinian Controversy," p. 149.

the congregation. He, too, lies in the graveyard of the chapel, and his tombstone contains the following inscription :—

Here
 Lyeth the remains of y^e
 REV^d JOHN CHORLEY Minister
 of this Place Obit May 13th
 1764 Aetatis Suae 61. Also JANE
 his wife Dau^{tr} of S^r Rob^t Duck
 enfield Bar^t who died May 11th
 1781 Aged 91. Also JOHN CHORLEY
 Junr their son who died Jan^y
 4th 1826 in the 89th year of his age.
 Also ELLEN the wife of John Chorley
 Junr who died July 10th 1809 in
 the 54th year of her age.

The Rev. Richard Hodgson was the next minister. He was the son of the Rev. John Hodgson, of Lincoln, educated at Daventry¹ by Dr. Caleb Ashworth, being a student there in 1753, and settled at Ossett, in Yorkshire, in 1759. His ordination took place in 1762, and in 1765 he removed to Monton. He remained until about 1771, when he left for Nantwich, where he continued nearly thirty years, keeping a school in addition to his pastoral duties. His next and last charge was Doncaster, from 1800 to 1815, where he died, on Thursday, January 18th, 1816, in the 81st year of his age. The Rev. Richard Bolton is named by Mr. Poynting as successor to Mr. Hodgson, and he says that he began in June, 1771, and died in 1773. I am inclined to think that there is some error about these dates, and especially about the latter. Mr. Bolton held pastorates at Rochdale and Preston, and the reader is asked to consult previous volumes of this work for further information respecting him.²

In a paper which he wrote for the Royal Society during his residence at Monton Mr. Bolton gives some interesting particulars about his congregation, most of whom he describes as "farmers, remark-

¹ A writer in the "Monthly Repository" for 1816 (p. 243) wrongly places him amongst the Warrington students.

² Vide vol. i., p. 16, and note 1; vol. iii., p. 242. There is evidence that Mr. Bolton was at Preston after 1781.

able for their diligence, sobriety, and long life." The Rev. John Ludd Fenner followed. He, also, was educated at Daventry, and settled first at Bicester, removing thence to Monton in 1774. He remained until 1779, when he became pastor of the Dissenting congregation at Devizes. Subsequently he was at Taunton and Kenilworth.¹ He died at Taunton in 1833, aged eighty-two years. The Rev. H. Smith comes next, removing in 1786 to North Shields, and eventually seceding to the Church of England. The Rev. Harry Toulmin held the pastorate from 1787 to 1788, when he removed to Chowbent.² The Rev. George Wiche followed Mr. Toulmin. He was a native of Taunton, and nephew of the Rev. John Wiche, "the correspondent and friend of Lardner." He was educated partly at Hoxton and partly at Daventry, settling at Monton in 1788. He remained until the close of 1795, when, having scruples about preaching for hire,³ he resigned, and "went to London to seek employment, and, as he considered it, moral independence. After many difficulties and privations, now seeking employment, now employed in the warehouse of a silversmith, now in a cheese warehouse, and now in a bottle warehouse, he emigrated to New York as agent to a mercantile house in Manchester. Disappointed in this situation he hastened to join his old friend Mr. Toulmin, in Kentucky, but took the yellow fever in Philadelphia, and died." This was on August 23rd, 1799, at the age of thirty-three years. The Rev. Thomas Knowles was minister from 1796 to 1797, dying in the latter year, and being succeeded by the Rev. Robert Smethurst. He was born at Blackley, near Manchester, July 29th, 1777, "a year long remembered in that village as that in which an

¹ Mr. Poynting says that he removed from Monton to Nantwich, but that is an error.

² Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for additional information respecting Mr. Toulmin.

³ He published in 1796:—

THE
DECLARATION
OF
GEORGE WICHE,
On resigning the office of an Hired Preacher.

alarming earthquake occurred, on Sunday, September 14."¹ His ministerial training was obtained at the Manchester Academy, and his settlement at Monton took place in May, 1798. "In the same year," says his biographer, "he received the appointment of Stand School, an office which he filled during twenty-four years. The appointment compelled him to reside at Stand, which is distant six miles from Monton."² For nearly fifty years he laboured here, resigning his life and ministry together in October, 1846.³ In the chapel graveyard, near to the Rev. Jeremiah Aldred's grave, is a tombstone thus inscribed :—

This vault contains the remains of the
REV^D. ROBERT SMETHURST,
Green Hill, Stand,
Who died October 15th, 1846,
in the 70th year of his age
and the 50th of his ministerial labours at this place.

In the early part of his ministry—in 1802—the chapel was rebuilt, and it was in his day that Unitarianism came to be "boldly preached." The Rev. Thomas Elford Poynting, who was educated at the Manchester New College, was appointed assistant to Mr. Smethurst a few months before his death, subsequently taking sole charge of the congregation. In addition to his pastoral duties, he held for three years the post of Theological Tutor of the Unitarian Home Missionary Board, Manchester. In 1875⁴ the old chapel was replaced by the present handsome structure, which cost some £20,000. In the vestry is a copy of the brass plate laid over the cavity of the foundation stone, which reads thus :

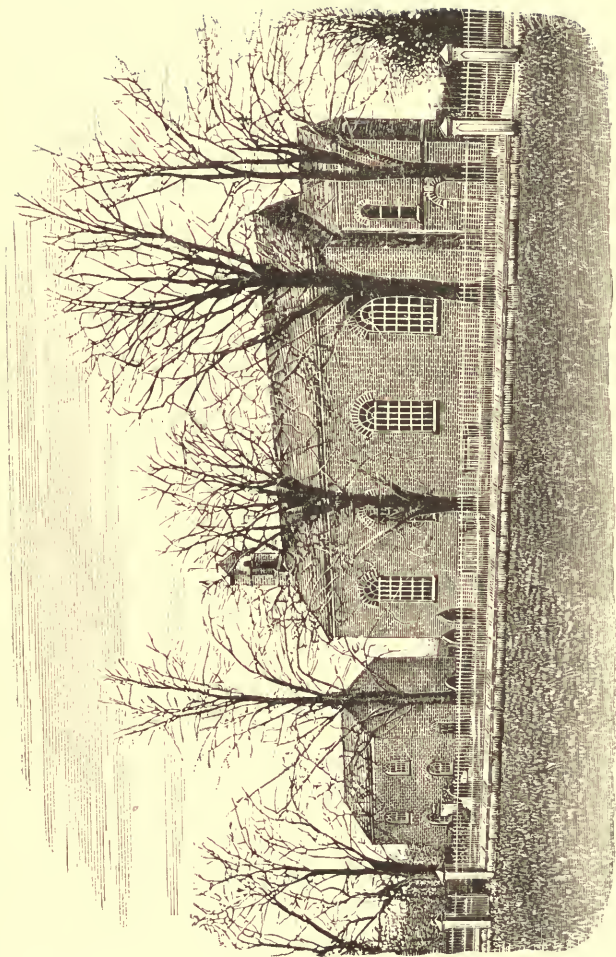
This Church,
erected by the Congregation of
Christians worshipping in the
Ancient Chapel near this
spot, is dedicated to the worship
of God the Father Almighty.
August 30th, 1873.

¹ "Christian Reformer" for 1848, p. 57.

² *Ibid.*

³ The Rev. John Smethurst, for some time minister at Knutsford, in Cheshire, and who died in America in 1820, was the younger brother of the Rev. Robert Smethurst.

⁴ The memorial stone was laid in 1873.



MONTON OLD CHAPEL AND SCHOOL.

LANCASHIRE NONCONFORMITY.

Minister: THOMAS ELFORD POYNTING.

Building Committee:

SILAS LEIGH, President.

JOHN BROOK, J.P., Chairman.

HENRY LEIGH, Treasurer.

JOHN DENDY, B.A., Secretary.

JONATHAN LEIGH, THOMAS DIGGLES,

JOHN FLETCHER.

Mr. Poynting died shortly after the erection of the new building, in 1878, being laid in the graveyard where several of his predecessors rest. His tombstone contains the following:—

In Memory of
THOMAS ELFORD POYNTING,
for 31 years Minister of this Place.
Died February 28th, 1878, aged 64 years.¹

The Rev. James Harwood, B.A., educated at Manchester New College and Leipzig, held the pastorate from November 3rd, 1878, to October 26th, 1884, when he removed to Nottingham, and is now at Brixton, London. He was followed on April 26th, 1885, by the present minister, the Rev. Philip Martineau Higginson, M.A. He is the grandson of the Rev. Edward Higginson, for ten years a minister at Stockport, and twenty at Derby; and he is the nephew of Dr. James Martineau. His training was received at Manchester New and University Colleges, and previous to his settlement at Monton he had laboured for thirteen years at Styal, in Cheshire.

On October 13th, 1888, Miss Lydia S. Leigh, daughter of Mr. Henry Leigh, J.P., laid the memorial stone of the present Monton Memorial Schools. It ought to be stated that the congregation is deeply indebted for many generous gifts to members of the Leigh and Booth families. The church is beautifully situated, being surrounded by a number of fine tall trees. It is close to Monton Green station, and has accommodation for over 500 people.

¹ It has already been indicated that Mr. Poynting wrote a "History of Monton Chapel," which, though not free from errors, has been found to be exceedingly useful.

II.—CONGREGATIONALISM AT PATRICROFT AND ECCLES.

IN the year 1796 Mr. Joseph Rawson,¹ formerly of Keighley, then of Manchester, "having many persons residing in the neighbourhood in his employment," directed his attention "to their spiritual wants,"² and in that way originated Congregationalism at Patricroft. The following passage informs us where the earliest efforts were made:—

Preaching was commenced in the first instance in a barn in Liverpool Road, which stood near to what is now called Bradshaw Street, but which is better known as Neddy Lane. In this place divine service was held as regularly as supplies could be obtained, the supplies having to come from Manchester and the surrounding districts. After worshipping for some time in the barn, the friends removed to a room on the west side of Patricroft Bridge. In this room they continued to worship for about two years, when they again removed to a house adjoining, occupied by Mr. John Bate. Here the Sunday School was formed.

In 1800 a chapel was erected, and the following notice of the opening service is extracted from the *Evangelical Magazine* for September of that year:—

On Monday, April 14, 1800, a chapel was opened at Patricroft, near Manchester, by the Rev. Messrs. Smith and Roby, for the encouragement of village preaching. We remark that the congregation, for whose convenience this chapel was erected, has been collected principally by the successful labours of some worthy members of the church in Cannon-street, Manchester, who have in other places likewise been very useful.³

The church was formed not, as the "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" states, in 1800, but in 1804, as the subjoined passage from the Patricroft Church Book shows:—

The following members of Patricroft Church were members of the Independent Church, Cannon Street, Manchester, under the pastoral care of the

¹ This good man died June 1st, 1824, aged seventy years, and was interred in the graveyard of Patricroft Chapel. His tombstone states that the "cause of Christ in this place originated in his Christian exertions."

² Sermon in Patricroft Chapel, by the Rev. William Place, September 7th, 1879, on the occasion of his twelfth anniversary as pastor of the church. For many interesting particulars I am indebted to Mr. Place's sermon.

³ Page 395.

Rev. William Roby, and were by desire dismissed from that church for the express purpose of forming themselves into a separate Independent Church at Patricroft. They received a regular dismissal at a church meeting held at Cannon Street on the 3rd of February, 1804, and immediately formed themselves into a Church at Patricroft. Their names were Moses Eadon, James Massey, George Partington,¹ John Bate, Mary Bate, James Cook, Mary Cook, and James Derbyshire.

The first minister of the church was the Rev. John Adamson, a native of Scotland. He was born July 12th, 1774, left an orphan early in life, and settled in Liverpool at the beginning of this century, where he attended the ministry of the Rev. David Bruce, of Newington Chapel. Thence he went to Mr. Roby's Academy,² Manchester, to be educated for the ministry, settling at Patricroft in 1807. His ordination took place on Tuesday, August 30th, 1808, when "Messrs. Sowden, Evans, Bradley, Roby, Jack, Coles engaged in the service; and Mr. Fletcher preached in the evening."³ Mr. Adamson, as was customary with the Congregational ministers of that time, had preaching services in several of the villages around, Eccles being amongst the number; and to help him in this work a small grant was made from the funds of the County Union in 1810. Shortly afterwards the chapel at Patricroft was enlarged, towards meeting the expense of which he collected in London about £300. In November, 1821, Mr. Adamson removed to Charlesworth, in Derbyshire, where he laboured until May, 1847, when growing infirmities disabled him for service.⁴ He died October 31st, 1848. His successor in the pastorate at Patricroft was the Rev. D. H. Creighton, from January, 1822, to January, 1828. He removed to Dublin, where he resided several years without pastoral charge. The Rev. John Bramall, a student from Highbury College, was the next minister. He was born at Heaton Norris, near Stockport, and

¹ Subsequently a Congregational minister in Lancashire and Derbyshire. Vide vols. ii. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² In the list of students educated by Mr. Roby, printed in Slate's "History of the Lancashire Congregational Union," Mr. Adamson's name is not given.

³ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1809, p. 218.

⁴ "Congregational Year Book" for 1848.

was brought up in the Established Church, the church of his parents. Removing to Coventry, he came into contact with the Rev. John Sibree, Congregational minister there, whose church he eventually joined, and through whom he found his way into college. He settled at Patricroft in 1830, removing to Stainland, in Yorkshire, in March, 1841. His next charge was at Swanland, near Hull, where his health broke down. He resigned in September, 1850, and went to reside at Islington, attaching himself to Union Chapel, of which the late Dr. Allon was pastor. He died there on the 19th of January, 1864, aged sixty years. The Rev. T. H. Smith, who had been educated at Rotherham College, and had laboured at Denton about four years, succeeded Mr. Bramall in May, 1843. He resigned in August, 1848, and resided some time in Manchester without charge. The Rev. George Shaw, a student from Rotherham College is the next on the ministerial roll, beginning his labours on the 20th of July, 1851. This ministry is noteworthy because of the enlargement of the chapel and removal of a debt of £400. He resigned on the 30th of September, 1866, and removed to Woodbridge, in Suffolk. He is now living at Hyde, near Manchester, in retirement. The Rev. William Place, who was educated at Airedale College, and who had previously laboured at Whitehaven, entered upon duty as the sixth pastor on September 8th, 1867. In 1870, the old chapel, which had sitting accommodation for about 300 people, was superseded by the present one, which contains 750 sittings. The cost, including land and fencing, was £4,373. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. Robert Wilson, of Patricroft, on July 31st, 1869, and the building was opened for worship on April 15th, 1870. The Revs. Dr. Allon, of London, and Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, being the preachers. Failing health brought about Mr. Place's resignation and retirement from active duty in 1887. He is now resident at Southport. The present pastor, the Rev. J. H. Dingle, educated in the Free Methodist Institute, and who had previously spent a few years at Horncastle, Lincolnshire, followed Mr. Place in April, 1888. New school buildings have recently been erected at a cost of about £2,500, towards which the Lancashire and Cheshire Chapel Building Society made a grant of

£250. Mr. George Hadfield, J.P., who had promised to perform the opening ceremony on January 18th, 1893, was prevented through sickness, but he sent a cheque for £100, Dr. Mackennal, of Bowdon, taking his place. There are one or two items of interest which ought not to be absent from a sketch of Congregationalism here. One is that the church, previous to Mr. Place's settlement, had been for many years the recipient of a generous grant from the funds of the County Union; and the other that several notabilities were once connected with it, viz., George Hadfield, Esq., M.P., to whom Lancashire Congregationalism owes a deep debt of gratitude; James H. Heron, Esq., one of the most devoted friends of the County Union in its infancy, and father of Sir Joseph Heron; Edward Baines, Esq., author of the "History of Lancashire;" and the Rev. Samuel McFarlane, now Dr. McFarlane, resident at Bedford, long and honourably associated with missionary effort in New Guinea.

Congregationalism at Eccles is, strictly speaking, only a little over a quarter of a century old;¹ but, fifty years earlier, attempts had been made to establish an interest here. It has already been noted² that the Rev. John Adamson was in the habit of preaching at Eccles in 1810, and for several years after this the sum of £5 appears in the Union Reports as rent for a preaching room here. The Report ending April, 1823, contains the following, which shows that the work had not quite died out at that date:—

Eccles has not yet claimed the conditional grant of pecuniary aid from the funds of the County Union, the friends in that neighbourhood having been disappointed in the hope of renting a suitable place to preach in. Renewed encouragement will stimulate them to renewed efforts.

Neither the "encouragement" nor the "efforts" seem to have

¹ In the new edition of the "History of Lancashire" (vol. iii., p. 264) appears the following: "The first chape for the use of the Independents or Congregationalists was erected at Eccles in 1759, at which time Mr. Chorley had become an advocate of Unitarian principles, and taught them unreservedly from his pulpit" On what authority this rests I do not know. I can find no evidence either traditional or documentary of any such early Independent church, and it is more than doubtful that Mr. Chorley was a Unitarian.

² Vide ante p. 12.

been "renewed" during many years, for we have no further indication of Congregational work at Eccles until 1857, when we meet with the following :—

At the close of last year [1857] a chapel, several years ago occupied by the Primitive Methodists in this village [Eccles], upon undergoing various alterations and improvements, was re-opened for Divine worship in connection with the Independent denomination, when three sermons were preached ; those in the morning and evening by the Rev. James Bruce, of Manchester, and that in the afternoon by the Rev. G. Shaw, of Patricroft. Appended to the building there is a large room, intended for Sabbath schools, and also to be used as a Temperance Hall. At the opening services and since, on the Sabbath, the attendance of hearers has been very encouraging.¹

The honour of planting Congregationalism here belongs to Hope Chapel, Salford, during the pastorate of the Rev. G. B. Bubier, as the following sentences show :—

Several members of that church having become resident at Eccles, after a meeting for conference with their pastor, and with a few members of other churches residing in the neighbourhood, brought the religious necessities of the locality before the attention of their brethren, and requested the counsel and assistance of the church. It was unanimously resolved by the church to appoint a committee for the commencement of religious operations in the village, for the immediate erection of a chapel, and for the conduct of public services therein, until such time as a separate church might be formed. Several members of neighbouring Independent churches were subsequently added to that committee, and it was at once determined to secure a most eligible plot of land, admirably situated near the railway station, at the junction of the main street of the village with the principal road to Manchester. The friends at Hope Chapel were most generous in the contribution of funds, and were so powerfully assisted by those to whom the project was made known that the sum of £3,500 was speedily raised.²

The corner stone of the new building was laid on Good Friday, April 22nd, 1859, by Mr. George Wood, when Professor Newth, of Lancashire College, offered the dedicatory prayer, and the Rev. G. B. Bubier delivered an address. It was opened for public worship on Good Friday, April 6th, 1860, when the Revs. Dr. Raffles,

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1858, p. 96.

² "Congregational Year Book" for 1860, p. 244.

of Liverpool ; Samuel Martin, of London ; G. B. Bubier, of Manchester ; and Dr. Halley, of London, were the preachers. The church, which is of the "early decorated style of Gothic architecture," is a most handsome structure, with a tower and spire, and has accommodation for 800 people. "Two features of this movement," says the "Year Book," "are deserving of attention. First, a Christian Church *colonising*, by the advice and with the active co-operation of its pastor, and all the members ; and, secondly, a church and schools to be built and opened *free from debt*."¹ The church was formally constituted on June 12th, 1860, when the Rev. G. B. Bubier preached, and Professor Newth, of Lancashire College, delivered an address. A letter was read "of great spiritual beauty and tenderness from the church at Hope, transferring fifteen of its communicants to constitute the first members of the church at Eccles. To this number fourteen others were added by letters of transfer from other churches." The first pastor of the young church was the Rev. G. H. Brown, a student from New College, London, who began his labours July 27th, 1862, being ordained on September 4th of that year. In 1883 the church was enlarged by east and west transepts, which, with organ improvements, cost about £2,800.

Mr. Brown concluded a long and useful ministry here in March, 1884, removing to Christchurch, Bristol, where he still labours. The Rev. H. H. Carlisle, LL.B., educated at Cheshunt, and who had previously laboured at Southampton about twenty-six years, succeeded Mr. Brown on April 12th, 1885. He resigned in November, 1891, and is now at Scarborough. The present minister is the Rev. J. R. Bailey. He was educated at Lancashire College, and previous to his settlement at Eccles, in 1893, held important pastorates at Carlisle and Halifax.

III.—CONGREGATIONALISM IN PENDLEBURY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

IN the Report of the County Union for the year ending April, 1819, is the following interesting passage, which, besides supplying us with information respecting the origin of the Pendlebury

¹ "Congregational Year Book" for 1860, p. 244.

Congregational Church, vividly describes the moral condition of the people at the time :—

Among the new¹ spheres of labour which have been entered upon in this district since the last anniversary, *Pendlebury* and its neighbourhood are deserving of special attention. Our brethren, ADAMSON, JACKSON, DYSON, and SLATE, have preached here alternately on Sabbath evenings during the past half-year, to congregations regularly amounting to *three hundred*, and occasionally to *four hundred* persons. The population is very considerable, and so proverbially profligate that the place is commonly called by the most awful and tremendous names. Several individuals begin to express a serious concern for their souls. It behoves the Union to follow up the advantages gained over the Prince of Darkness in so distinguished a part of his territories, by the adoption of some vigorous measures.

The “brethren” whose names are given in the foregoing extract lived considerable distances away: the Rev. John Adamson was at Patricroft, the Rev. Thomas Jackson at Wharton, the Rev. Joseph Dyson at Farnworth, and the Rev. Richard Slate at Stand. Nor were distance and bad roads the only difficulties they had to face. It is especially recorded of the Rev. Joseph Dyson that he “often met with a warm reception in passing through Clifton by being pelted with stones;” but the Congregational ministers of a century ago counted not their lives “dear” unto themselves in their enthusiasm to evangelise the country.

The services at Pendlebury about this time were conducted in a house in Union Street, the upper room being occupied by the Congregationalists, and the lower one by a Church of England Sunday School. In 1821 the first chapel was erected² in Chapel Street. It was opened on the 14th of June, when sermons were preached by the Revs. J. Dyson, of Farnworth, and J. A. Coombs, of Manchester, the Revs. J. Adamson and Richard Slate taking the devotional exercises. The congregation in the evening, it is recorded, was “so large as to render it necessary to conduct the

¹ It should be pointed out that Pendlebury in 1818 was not an absolutely “new” sphere of labour, for Mr. Adamson, of Patricroft, had been accustomed to preach there and at Folly Lane, Roe Green, and Boothstown some six or seven years previously.

² The “Union Report” says “by one of the hearers for the use of the congregation and Sunday School.”

worship in an adjacent field." Towards the end of 1823, or beginning of 1824, the Rev. John Penkethman, formerly of Whar-ton, was called to the pastorate of the church, and the following year (1825) it is reported that "Pendlebury cannot accommodate a larger congregation or school without a larger place of worship," and that a church had been formed, which then consisted of nine members.¹ In 1825 the second chapel,² "36 feet by 45 feet," was built, the opening sermons being preached by the Revs. Wm. Roby and S. Bradley, of Manchester. It is said that the sum expended on the building was raised at the time, except £90. Mr. Penkethman had preaching stations at Swinton, Clifton, Wardley Lane, and Irlams o' th' Height. Trouble arising, he removed about 1828 to Ashton-in-Makerfield.³ After he removed⁴ the cause sank rapidly, the membership of the church became reduced to three or four in number, and a committee of the County Union appointed to investigate matters advised dissolution with a view to a new beginning.⁵ Eventually the advice was accepted, and a committee was formed out of the congregation to carry on the work. On the 28th of November, 1830, the Rev. John

¹ The "Lancashire Congregational Calendar," on what authority I know not, says the church was formed in 1820. It is just possible, but not likely.

² The first chapel was subsequently converted into two cottages. This second building was so beautifully situated that it was called the "Chapel in the Gardens." The gardens have all gone, and very different is the prospect to-day.

³ Vide vols. ii. and iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for additional information respecting him.

⁴ A Mr. Elliott is said to have succeeded Mr. Penkethman, but he remained only a few months.

⁵ The gentlemen composing this committee were the Revs. William Roby, R. S. McAll, J. A. Coombs, James Deakin, Joseph Dyson, and Messrs. B. Joule, S. Fletcher, and Barnes. They met at the house of Mr. Joule, then resident at Pendlebury, but a member of Mr. Roby's church; and the late Rev. S. T. Porter, who was present on the occasion, says that the members refused to dissolve the church. "Once or twice," he says, "they pleaded Divine right; then civil law; then the eternal sacredness of Independency; and at last they shut themselves solidly up in the fastness—'We cannot, and we will not;' and it was not until the committee intimated that they could not give public money to such a church that dissolution followed."



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Anyon, of Inglewhite, near Preston, began his labours here, and on the 11th of September, 1832, a church was again formed, consisting of eight members. The Report for April, 1834, speaks of the erection of a gallery and improvements in the chapel accomplished during the year, and "paid for to the amount of £300;" and that for 1840 of the prosperous condition of the church, which enabled the "friends to declare themselves independent of any pecuniary aid from the Union. The debt of £190, which was due upon the chapel to two individuals, has been liberally cancelled by them." In December, 1845, Mr. Anyon removed to Park Chapel, Ramsbottom, where he laboured until his death.¹ The Rev. Mark Hardaker followed in March, 1849, and at this time the church again became a recipient of help from the Union Funds. Mr. Hardaker removed to Horwich, in January, 1854,² and was succeeded by the Rev. Alexander Bell in January, 1857. He was educated at Dublin, entered the ministry in 1843, labouring for some time in Ireland, and subsequently at Mottram, in Cheshire, whence he removed to Pendlebury. He preached farewell sermons "amid the good wishes of many" on May 1st, 1864, and removed to Westerham, in Kent. He is now resident in London without charge. The Rev. G. Rodgers, who was educated for the Baptist ministry, took charge of the church in August, 1864. He resigned in April, 1867, and subsequently held a pastorate for a short time at Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire. The Rev. H. F. Walker, trained at Nottingham Institute, and who had previously laboured about two years at Uppingham, in Rutlandshire, entered upon his duties as successor to Mr. Rodgers August 9th, 1868. His ordination took place on November 22nd, 1869. In 1873 the church again became independent of pecuniary help, and two years later it celebrated its jubilee at a meeting³ presided over by Henry Lee, Esq., J.P. In 1882 the old chapel, "which had long been felt to be unsuited to

¹ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for additional information.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for more details.

³ Mr. Walker read at this meeting an interesting sketch of the church's history, afterwards reprinted from the *Swinton and Pendlebury Times*, to which I am indebted for several particulars.

the growing requirements of the district, was abandoned for a more imposing structure in Swinton, on a site central to the two villages."¹ Trinity Congregational Church,² as the new building is called, was opened for worship on June 13th, 1882, when Dr. Macfayden preached the sermon, the Revs. H. F. Walker (pastor) and W. H. Fothergill, of Heywood, assisting in the service. The cost of the sacred edifice was about £3,000, and it has sitting accommodation for 430 people. Mr. Walker removed two years later to Loughborough, in Leicestershire, where he still labours. His successor, in July, 1885, was the Rev. R. H. Cotton, M.A., who entered the Congregational ministry from the Established Church. He resigned in 1889,³ and was succeeded on the first Sunday in April, 1891, by the Rev. John Shuker,⁴ of Tottington, who is the present minister. The old chapel at Pendlebury is still in existence, and is used as a Day and Sunday School.

The Congregational Church at Worsley Road, Swinton, originated with a few men employed in the mill of John Gibb and Sons, Moorside, who, with the consent and co-operation of their employers, in March, 1861, began to hold a Sunday School in a large room belonging to the mill. About this time, also, the Rev. G. B. Bubier, pastor of Hope Chapel, Salford, commenced services there, and a considerable congregation was speedily gathered. In 1862 a grant was obtained from the County Union Funds, and in that year a church was formed, consisting of sixteen members, the Rev. G. B. Bubier officiating on the occasion.

It is recorded, in 1863, of the "one hundred and ten scholars now in the school, seventy never previously attended any Sabbath School."⁵

Students from Lancashire College supplied the pulpit until May, 1865, when the Rev. Peter Webster was appointed by the County Union to labour here. Amidst many difficulties, but not without success, Mr. Webster continued his ministry until April, 1879,

¹ "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" for 1883, p. 102.

² It is distant from the old chapel about half a mile.

³ Mr. Cotton is now in the Episcopal Church, in America.

⁴ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for further information.

⁵ "Lancashire County Union Report," for the year ending April, 1863.

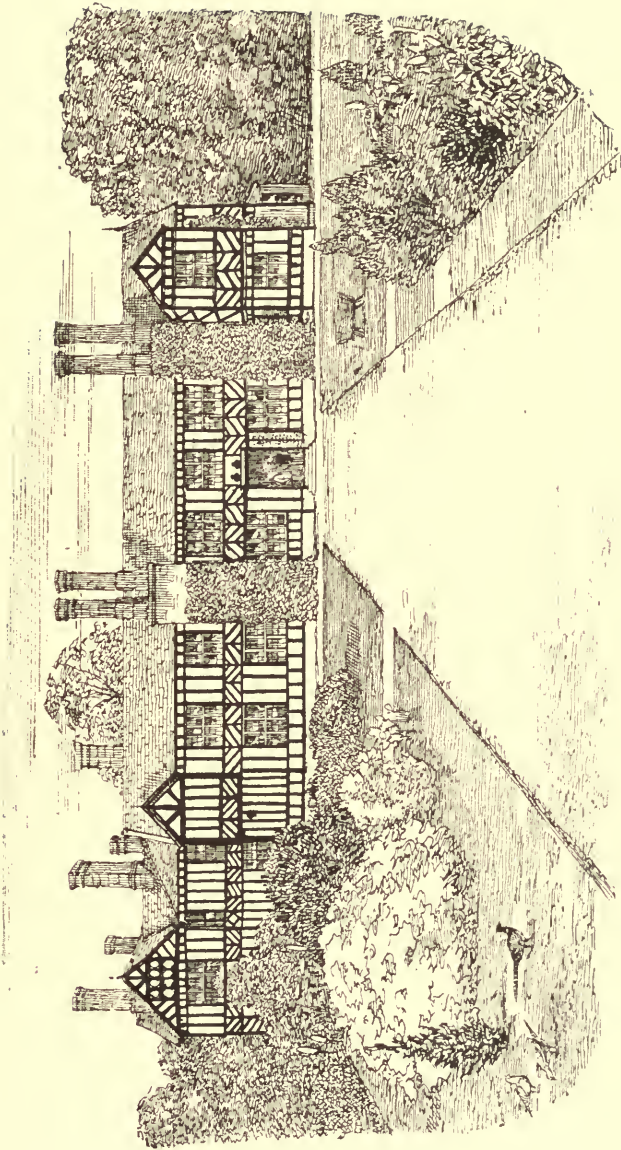
when he resigned, subsequently removing to Preesall, near Fleetwood.¹ Previous to this, however, he had seen the erection of the chapel in Worsley Road, Swinton. The building, which accommodates some 270 people, cost about £1,450, and was opened free from debt, the congregation taking possession of their new home in November, 1870. The next minister was the Rev. W. H. Chesson, a student from Lancashire College. He began his labours in March, 1880, and succeeded in bringing the church to dispense with Union help. He resigned in June, 1887, and is now pastor of the Congregational Church at Alnwick, in Northumberland. The Rev. J. C. McCappin² had charge of the church from November, 1888, to June, 1890. The present minister, the Rev. P. Carrotte, who was educated at Rotherham, and had previously held pastorates at Barton-on-Humber and Sleaford, entered upon duty in August, 1890. At Moorside, which is about three-quarters of a mile from the Worsley Road Church, the friends conduct Pleasant Sunday Afternoon services in their British School. A mission in Folly Lane has been established.

Before quitting this neighbourhood a few sentences must be devoted to an older interest still, which had a promising existence for a few years. About 1820, when the Rev. John Penkethman was minister at Wharton, he preached, amongst other places, at Edge Fold, where the room used for the purpose was usually crowded. In 1824 a chapel was erected in Hilton Lane, Worsley, by which name the interest here was henceforth called. It was capable of seating over 500 people, and was opened on June 9th of that year, the preachers being the Revs. G. F. Ryan, of Stockport; Wm. Roby, of Manchester; and J. A. Coombs, of Salford. The collections on the occasion amounted to £32, and it is said that a "considerable debt had been unavoidably incurred in the erection of this chapel, with the school under it, in which 300 poor children were educated."² There was at this time a church with a membership of nineteen and a congregation of about 300. The pastor was the Rev. William Oram, who was educated at Hackney. He resigned shortly after the chapel was opened, and was for many years a Con-

¹ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1824, p. 405.



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gregational minister at Benson, in Oxfordshire. The "County Union Report," for the year ending April, 1826, says that the people had invited the Rev. William Gothard,¹ whose stay also was short. The chapel appears to have been closed for some time after Mr. Gothard's removal, but it was re-opened in May, 1837, and in June of the year following the Rev. R. J. Matthews, from Nassington, in Northamptonshire, took charge of the place. On August 6th, 1838, he was "solemnly ordained," when the ministers assisting in the service were: Revs. J. Bramall, of Patricroft; R. Fletcher, of Manchester; Wm. Jones, of Bolton; J. Anyon, of Pendlebury; J. Dyson, of Farnworth; and Dr. Clunie, of Manchester.² Mr. Matthews remained some considerable time after this, but the church, which had for a year or two received grants from the Union Funds, ceased to be in association with the Union, and eventually became extinct. Mr. Matthews subsequently laboured at Shipdham, in Norfolk. He died in London, January 23rd, 1868, aged eighty years.

Proceeding in a north-easterly direction we come to Prestwich (Besses o'th' Barn) Congregational Church, on the other side of the Irwell. This church originated with the junior students of Lancashire College, who, assisted by one or two Manchester friends, began to conduct services here in 1863.³ The present structure, capable of seating 800 people, was erected in 1865 at a cost of about £4,000, including that of the school, towards which the committee of the Bi-centenary Fund promised £1,000.

¹ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1839, p. 80.

³ Mr. Jonathan Lees, of Manchester, father of the Rev. Jonathan Lees, now an eminent missionary in China, pointed out the neighbourhood to a number of junior students as a promising field for work. Two of their number—Mr. J. S. Waide, now of Springhead, near Oldham, and Mr. J. Stimpson, now of Thirsk—went to view the land and consult with the Rev. Alexander Anderson, B.A., of Stand, who promised every assistance. Professor Newth, of Lancashire College, offered to be responsible for the expenses to the extent of £10. Two cottages were taken capable of accommodating about 120 people, and the first sermon was preached by a student, Mr. T. Cain, now pastor of the Stubbins Congregational Church, near Ramsbottom. On the first Sunday morning there were five scholars, in the afternoon sixty-seven, and in the evening 110 persons were present.

The communicants were associated with Stand Independent Church, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Alexander Anderson, B.A., who from the first took a warm interest in the cause; but in 1866 a separate church was formed. In this year also the Rev. Osric Copland, a student from Cheshunt College, began his labours as the first pastor, and in the course of two or three years the church was able to dispense with assistance from the



A BIT OF THE IRWELL, NEAR CLIFTON.

Union. Mr. Copland resigned in 1869, and went to Australia, where, until recently, he was minister of the Congregational Church at Prahran, Melbourne, Victoria. The Rev. Llewellyn Porter, educated at Lancashire College, and who had previously spent a few years at Heckmondwike, in Yorkshire, succeeded Mr. Copland in 1871. He removed to Mossley in 1877, and is now at Hastings. He was followed in 1878 by the Rev. H. H. Richardson, a student from Airedale College. He resigned in 1880, and

in that year the Rev. Stephen Hartley accepted the pastorate of the church. His ministerial training was obtained at Lancashire College, and previous to his settlement at Prestwich he had laboured some years at Ripponden, in Yorkshire. Mr. Hartley resigned in September, 1892, and is now without charge. As yet no successor has been appointed.

Not far from Prestwich is the Rooden Lane or Heaton Park Congregational Church, which was commenced in 1862. Through the energy of a lady and gentleman a night school was opened in the early part of that year, and before its close a mission was started under the auspices of the church at Cheetham Hill. In 1865 a chapel was built and opened, and in 1867 it is described as "an interesting movement, commenced and largely sustained by the church at Cheetham Hill, under the pastorate of the Rev. G. W. Conder. The place is situated on the high road to Bury, between four and five miles from the Manchester Exchange. A huge line of houses contain about 1,500 working people. The building has been provided almost wholly by the liberality of Mr. Conder's people."¹ In the following year a branch church, consisting of nine members, was formed, and connected with Cheetham Hill. After Mr. Conder, the Rev. Thomas Hamer, who succeeded him in the pastorate of the Cheetham Hill Church, continued to exercise a wise and helpful oversight of the cause at Rooden Lane, Sunday services being mainly conducted by Lancashire College students. In 1875 the Cheetham Hill Church handed the management of the station over to a committee of six gentlemen, mainly associated with Broughton Park Congregational Church. A Bible woman had for some time been engaged, whose services were well received by the people. In 1881 a new building, within a few minutes' walk of Heaton Park Station, was erected on land which had been previously purchased by Henry Lee, Esq., of Sedgley Park, and Thomas Rymer, Esq. It was opened in November of that year by Dr. Dale, of Birmingham. It is in Gothic style, with a schoolroom on the ground floor affording space for 400 scholars, and the chapel itself has been arranged to accommodate the same number of

¹ "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" for 1867-8, p. 36.

persons. The total cost was about £4,525, which was met by subscriptions and a grant of £500 from the Chapel Building Society. The Rev. G. D. Hughes, a Lancashire College student, was appointed minister, beginning his duties as such with the opening of the building. He remained until October, 1884, when he removed to Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire, where he now labours. The Rev. Alfred Cooke followed in 1886. He was trained for the ministry at Nottingham Institute, and had laboured for some years at Sedgley, in Staffordshire. He resigned in the beginning of 1888, and subsequently removed to Plymouth. The present minister, the Rev. James Bainton, assumed the pastorate in 1890,¹ under whose care the church is making steady progress. It ought to be stated that the cause here is indebted for much generous help to the Broughton Park Congregational Church, which undertook its management in 1877, and in particular to Mr. Henry Lee, who has befriended it from the beginning.

IV.—BLACKLEY UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

WRITING in 1854, the Rev. John Booker, B.A., says:—

The township of Blackley, wherein the chapel of which it is now proposed to treat was located, is distant about four miles north north-east from Manchester. It is situated on the river Irk, a stream so called from the liveliness of its current, which has entitled it to the figurative appellation of Iwrck, Irke, or Roebuck.²

Adjoining, and formerly belonging to the ancient chapelry of Blackley, is the township of Crumpsall, which has the double honour of being the reputed birthplace of Hugh Oldham, LL.B., Bishop of Exeter, and of Humphrey Chetham. Most reluctantly am I compelled by the exigencies of space to pass by these two Lancashire worthies, as also two others, with a very brief notice—viz., Father Travis and John Bradford. Blackley claims both

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² "History of Blackley Chapel," p. 5.

these men, if not as natives, as warm friends, who were staunch Protestants when Queen Mary set England ablaze in her zeal to establish Romanism. Travis suffered punishment for his Protestantism, and John Bradford was burnt at Smithfield a few months after Latimer and Ridley. "He endured the flame," writes his biographer, "in a fresh gale of wind in a hot summer's day, without reluctance, confirming by his death the truth of that doctrine which he had so diligently and powerfully preached



THE REV. JOHN BRADFORD.

during his life, which ended July the first, 1556, in the prime, though in what year of his age is not certainly known."¹

The chapel referred to by Mr. Booker in the extract just given was, of course, the Episcopal Chapel erected for the convenience of those who found the mother church at Manchester too distant ;

¹"Abel Redeivus," by Fuller (1867), vol. i., p. 223. In "Writings of the Rev. John Bradford," by the Religious Tract Society, it is stated that he was born about 1510, and so at the time of his martyrdom he would be about forty-six years of age.

but, as the early ministers were Nonconformist in their views, the history of Nonconformity in this place would be incomplete if some notice of them were not given.

Oliver Carter, B.D., one of the fellows of the Collegiate Church in Manchester, had fixed his abode in Blackley in 1598, "discharging possibly the duties of resident incumbent." "His contentions," says Dr. Halley, "with the most Puritan bishop on the bench led him, in the latter part of his life, to speak with very little respect of the bishops, who, as he thought, were becoming 'lords over God's heritage.'"¹ Oliver Carter died in 1604-5, and was interred in the Collegiate Chapel, Manchester, March 21st.

The Rev. Thomas Paget was appointed minister of Blackley Chapel about 1600. He belonged to the Pagets of Rothley, in Leicestershire, and in 1617 he was cited to appear before Morton, Bishop of Chester, for Nonconformity. In 1631 he was released, and in order to escape a fine and imprisonment he fled into Holland, accepting in November, 1639, the pastorate of the English church in Amsterdam, where he remained until August, 1646. "During his residence abroad," says Mr. Booker, "he edited the works of his predecessor in the charge, the Rev. John Paget, first minister of the English church in that capital. This was in the year 1641. On returning to England, in 1646, he was nominated to the rectory of St. Chad's, Shrewsbury, which he held until 1659. He died in October, 1660, rector of Stockport." The Rev. William Rathband was Mr. Paget's successor, being appointed to Blackley about 1631. He had previously preached at Cockey Moor² nearly twenty years, and was intimate with the family of Oliver Heywood. The length of his stay at Blackley is not clear, but he was gone before 1648, in which year, on June 14th, the Rev. James Walton "appeared before the Classis at Manchester, exhibiting his dismissal from the congregation of Horwich and Bolton."³ In 1650 he was the minister of Blackley Chapel, when the Parliamentary Commissioners reported thus concerning him:—

¹ "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. i., p. 170.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ *Ibid.*

The said Mr. James Walton hath not any certen sallery but what the Inhabitants of the said Chappelry are pleased voluntarily to give him in lieu of their tyths, w^{ch} formerly they payed to the warden and fellowes as aforesaid . . . And that the said Mr. Walton hath manyfested disafecon to the p'sent governem^t by neglectinge to observe days of thankes givinge and humiliacon appointed by ordinance of pliam^t and speakinge against the Engagm^t by reason whereof the same place these dayes were not supplied.¹

Mr. Walton continued to attend the meetings of the Manchester Classis, as minister at Blackley, until July, 1652, when he appears to have removed. Subsequently he was ejected from Shaw Chapel, near Oldham. On the 14th of December of the same year the Rev. Daniel Smith "presented himselfe" to the Manchester Classis, "being desired by the elders at Blakeley, and was approved to preach as an expectant, in order to ordination."² His name is associated with the chapel until April, 1654. In September of the same year the Rev. Thomas Holland, M.A., from Ringley,³ is named as minister. He remained until 1662, when he suffered ejectment through the Act of Uniformity. In the Burial Register of the Collegiate Church, Manchester, appears the following:—

1674—Dec. 28. Thomas Holland of Newton, deceased in Oldham parish.

1674-5—Feb. 10. Hannah wife of Thomas Holland, late of Newton, clerk, deceased at Oldham.

With Mr. Holland the line of Nonconformist ministers at Blackley Chapel comes to an end,⁴ but their labours had not been without effect upon the people. As early as 1668 a congregation of Dissenters existed, "worshipping with such secrecy as the stringent laws enacted against Dissenters at that time rendered needful, a Mrs. Travis⁵ receiving the ministers at her own house." To this

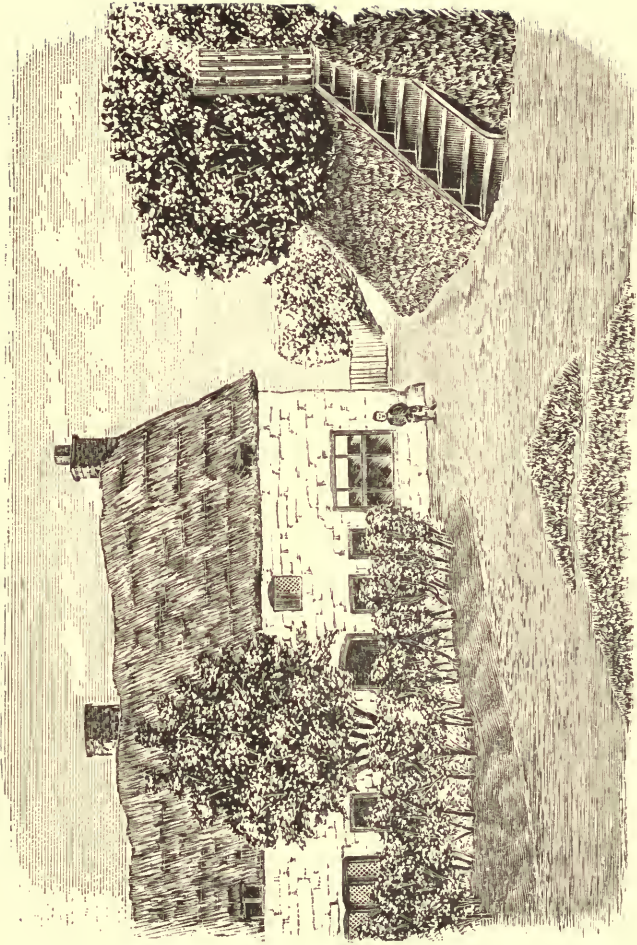
¹ "Commonwealth Church Survey" (Record Society Series, vol. i.), p. 10.

² "Manchester Classis," by Mr. Shaw, p. 186, being vol. xxii. of the Chetham Society publications (New Series).

³ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁴ The Rev. Thomas Pyke was buried in Blackley Chapel, August 21st, 1676, and whether that may be taken as an indication that the Nonconformists had some sort of hold upon the building I do not know. If they had, it was very temporary, much more so than was the case in some other parts of the county.

⁵ No doubt a descendant of Father Travis, previously mentioned.



PYKE FOLD, THE REPUTED RESIDENCE OF THE REV. THOMAS PYKE.

congregation the Rev. Thomas Pyke, who had been ejected from Radcliffe, ministered more or less until his death in 1676.¹ Information respecting these early times is exceedingly scanty, and the immediate successor of Mr. Pyke, and the place of meeting for the Nonconformists, are uncertainties. Oliver Heywood, however, in his diary, under date June 30th, 1682, writes about preaching to "a full company at Widow Travers's [Travis's]"² house. So that it appears occasional Nonconformist worship, at least, continued to be held there after Mr. Pyke's death. The first chapel for Nonconformist worship was erected in 1697,³ the site for which was given by William Rowlinson, an inhabitant of Blackley. Tradition has it that the foundation was laid by Mr. Joshua Taylor, of Alkington Green, when he was only sixteen years of age;⁴ and the first minister of the new meeting house was

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Turner's "Yorkshire Genealogist," &c., for January, 1889, p. 54.

³ The indenture bears date July 19th, 1697, and is between William Rowlinson, of Blackley, in the county of Lancaster, yeoman, on the one part, and Thomas Travis, of Blackley, aforesaid, chapman, George Travis, of the same place, chapman, Richard Ogden, of the same place, yeoman, and Ralph Wardleworth, of the same place, yeoman, on the other part. In the "Northowram Register" (p. 289) is the following notice of Mr. George Travis's untimely end: "George Travis, of Blakeley, in Manchester Parish, had bin at a Race at Ashton, fell of his Horse in a Small Brook near Newton Heath, & was taken up dead, Oct. 31 [1723]."

⁴ In the chapel graveyard is a tombstone thus inscribed:—

Here resteth the body of
 J O S H U A T A Y L O R,
 of Alkington,
 Who departed this life Sept. 17th, 1756,
 in the 75th year of his age.
 Also, MARY, his wife,
 Who departed this life March 23rd, 1781,
 in the 94th year of her age.
 Also, J A C O B, his son,
 Physician and Surgeon, the Father and Friend of the needy,
 Who departed this life June 21st, A.D., 1778,
 Aged 63 years.
 Also, J O S E P H, their son,
 Who departed this life April 17th, 1785.
 Aged 63 years.

probably the Rev. John Brooks. He appeared at the meeting of the United Brethren in Manchester, August 4th, 1696, as a candidate for the ministry in connection with the Manchester District; and was ordained at Macclesfield, June 17th, 1700, when he is described by Matthew Henry as "Mr. Brooks, of Blakely."¹ Nothing is known of him beyond this.² The Rev. John Heywood became the minister in 1702. He was educated at the Rathmell Academy by the Rev. Richard Frankland, and ordained at Warrington, June 16th, 1702. Like Monton Chapel, the one at Blackley suffered from the Sacheverel riots on June 20th, 1715, and this was during Mr. Heywood's ministry. His labours here were terminated by his death in January, 1731, and his remains were interred within the chapel where for nearly thirty years he had ministered.³ In the "Northowram Register" the event is thus referred to:—

Mr. John Heywood, minr. at Blakley New Chapel, near Manchester, bur. there Jan. 28. A great loss to the congregation and his family.⁴

The Rev. Thomas Valentine, who also was educated at Rathmell, was ordained at Knutsford, May 5th, 1719, and, after labouring at Kingsley, in Cheshire, about fourteen years, removed to Blackley in 1731. Mr. Booker says:—

The amount subscribed by the congregation for the support of Mr. Valentine fell short of his moderate wants, being little more than £25 per annum, and the close of his life was marked by poverty.

His death took place on May 10th, 1755, and, like his predecessor, he was buried within the chapel at Blackley.⁵

¹ "Memoirs of the Rev. M. Henry," by J. B. Williams, F.S.A.

² Probably the Rev. John Brook, or Brooks, who was at Yarmouth, Norfolk, in 1711, afterwards at Norwich, whence he removed to York, where he died in 1735.

³ In Mr. Heywood's time the Blackley congregation numbered 224 persons, of whom twelve were county voters.

⁴ Page 308. I imagine Mr. Heywood was a near relative of the Rev. Oliver Heywood. His children, of whom there were several, were baptised at Northowram Chapel, where Oliver Heywood had laboured.

⁵ Dr. Newth informs me that he has a MS., in which the name of the Rev. Thomas Valentine appears, and against it are the words "Of the

The next minister was the Rev. John Helme, from 1755 to 1757. Concerning him nothing definite is known.¹ He was succeeded in 1757 by the Rev. James Benn, a native of Lancashire, related to Cuthbert Harrison, an ejected minister, who laboured for many years at Elswick. Mr. Benn's first pastorate was at Forton, near Garstang. He removed from Blackley to Low Row, in Swaledale, Yorkshire, in 1766.² In April of that year the Rev. Philip Taylor, subsequently minister of Key Street, Liverpool, preached his first sermon at Blackley; but, if he was ever appointed to the pastorate here, it could not have been for more than a few months, for in 1766 the Rev. Thomas Gwatkin, "a young Non-conforming clergyman, educated at Oxford,³ commenced a short ministry. Afterwards he was led to conform. He went to America, and on his return obtained a living in Herefordshire." The Rev. John Pope, educated by the Rev. Micaiah Towgood at Exeter, followed about 1767, being appointed at the same time to the mastership of Stand School. In 1791 he succeeded the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield, as Tutor in Classics and Belles Lettres, at New College, Hackney, but two years afterwards returned to his old charge at Blackley. He laboured here until his death, in October, 1802, and was buried in a vault within the chapel, where a marble tablet thus describes his character:—

In memory of the
Rev. JOHN POPE,
Who died Oct. 28, 1802,
In the 58th year of his age.

Chowbent family." Several members of this family became Dissenting ministers. Vide vols. ii. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity;" also my "History of Independency in Tockholes."

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for information respecting one or two ministers of this name. Some writers on Blackley Nonconformity identify him with the Walmsley minister of that name, but without sufficient evidence.

² Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ So says Mr. Booker; but the name of Mr. Gwatkin is given in the list of students educated by Mr. Towgood, at Exeter. It is said that afterwards he was "ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury." (Vide "Monthly Repository" for 1818, p. 90.)

He was a man of considerable learning and ingenuity, and was minister of this chapel during a period of 35 years. For his truly benevolent heart he was greatly esteemed and beloved.

His affectionate flock, in gratitude for his services, have erected this stone as an humble tribute to his memory.

He published several sermons and pamphlets, amongst them being one preached at Blackley, September 21st, 1777, "occasioned by the shock of an earthquake the preceding Lord's day."¹ During the two years of Mr. Pope's absence from Blackley his former pupil, the Rev. Thomas Broadhurst, had charge of the congregation. He was a native of Blackley, and was trained at the New College, Hackney, being its first student. On the completion of his college course he went to Manchester, where he had a good school of twenty-five pupils,² serving the chapel at Blackley at the same time. In 1793 he removed to Taunton, thence to Halifax, in Yorkshire, and afterwards to Bath, resigning after a ministry there of considerably over forty years. He died at Bath, October 9th, 1851, aged eighty-four years. The next minister was the Rev. William Harrison. He was the son of the Rev. Ralph Harrison, of Manchester, being born May 21st, 1779, and baptised "not long after in the same year" by the Rev. John Pope, of Blackley. He succeeded Mr. Pope in January, 1802, and continued there for about fifty years. He died at Higher Broughton, Manchester, on November 30th, 1859.

His tablet in the chapel is thus inscribed :—

The Revd. WILLIAM HARRISON

Died December 31st, 1859,

Aged 80 years.

He was the Faithful Minister of this Chapel
for 50 years.

This Tablet is erected by the members of his congregation
and other friends

As a Memorial of their Respect and Esteem.

Some time after Mr. Harrison's retirement the pulpit was supplied by the Manchester District Unitarian Association, the name

¹ Vide ante p. 8.

² One of his Manchester pupils was the Rev. Jabez Bunting, D.D., who became President of the Wesleyan Conference.

of the Rev. J. C. Street being especially mentioned as an earnest worker. Brief ministries were exercised afterwards by the Revs. Abraham Lunn and J. Bishop, B.A., now resident in Dorsetshire without charge; and Adam Rushton, now living in retirement at Upton, near Macclesfield. The Rev. Joseph Freeston, who had previously laboured at Dob Lane, entered on duty at Blackley the first Sunday in August, 1869, and remained until 1880, removing in that year to Stalybridge. He is now at Macclesfield. The Rev. J. Basford followed with a short ministry, being succeeded by the Rev. J. McLaren Cobban. The present minister, the Rev. John Ellis, educated at the Home Missionary College, Manchester, took charge in July, 1885.

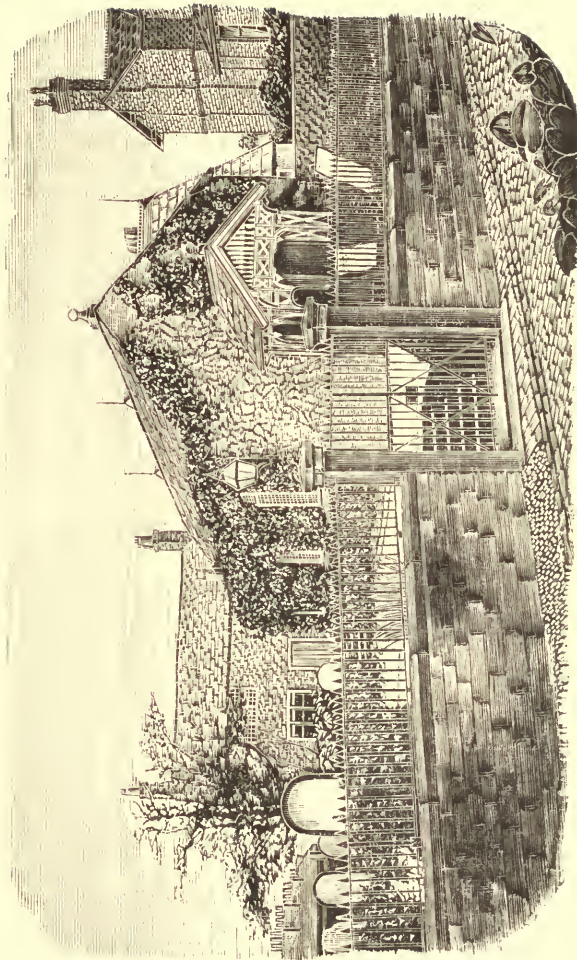
The old chapel, which stood until 1884, is thus described by Mr. Booker:—

It is a building of no pretension, its limits not exceeding those of an ordinary-sized schoolroom, which it much resembles. Its extreme length is 44 feet 6 inches, and its width 19 feet 9 inches. The interior is filled up with pews, seventeen in number, affording accommodation for about one hundred and thirty persons; but the congregation rarely exceeds thirty, of whom the greater proportion is from a distance. The exterior, in itself unattractive, is rendered picturesque by a thick covering of ivy, which conceals its stuccoed walls. Attached to the south wall is a sun-dial with the following inscription:—

My change is sure, it may be soon,
 Each hastening minute leads me on;
 The awful summons draweth nigh,
 And every day I live I die.¹

The present chapel, which has accommodation for 300 people, stands on the site of the old structure which it has superseded. The memorial stone was laid, May 17th, 1884, by the late Alderman Philip Goldschmidt, Mayor of Manchester, and it was opened for public worship the following year.

¹ "History of Blackley Chapel," p. 94. To this work I am indebted for much of the foregoing information.



BLACKLEY OLD DISSENTING CHAPEL,

V.—DOB LANE CHAPEL, FAILSWORTH.

NONCONFORMITY at Failsworth—or Newton Heath¹—began in the same way and about the same time as it did at Blackley, distant a few miles. The Act of Uniformity led to the ejection, in 1662, of the Rev. John Walker, M.A.² His father, the Rev. William Walker, was minister at Newton Heath in 1642, whence, about 1649, he removed to Brindle, near Preston. He died in 1651, and was buried at Manchester, June 10th. John Walker had been associated with his father in the ministry at Newton Heath previous to his removal to Brindle, after which event he took sole charge. In the Rev. Henry Newcome's diary there is an interesting passage under date January 6th, 1662, relating to a meeting at Mr. Walker's house to consider what should be done in view of the passage of the Uniformity Bill in the House of Commons:—

I got up, and about 10, after duties, went to Newton to Mr. Walker's, w^{re} I saw some of ye m^{ns} and had profitable company together. It was proposed that each should consider seriously both w^t grounds wee had of hopes or fears in this gloomy day. And w^t encouragem^{ts} to beare up ye heart welle if ye worst should come. Wee supt at Sam: Booker's y^s night, & it was 12 before wee went to bed.³

After his ejection Mr. Walker is lost to sight for several years, but in 1682 he succeeded the Rev. Samuel Newton at Rivington,

¹ The chapel stands on the Oldham Road, on the Failsworth side of the boundary of the Townships of Failsworth and Newton Heath. It is distant three miles from Manchester and three and a half from Oldham. Dob Lane was the name formerly given to that part of Oldham Road, from the chapel to Watchcote, Failsworth, and that is the name now used to describe the district.

² Curiously enough, Calamy, in his account of the ejected and silenced ministers, published in 1713, gives the Rev. John Walker as the ejected minister of Newton Heath, but in his "Continuation" he corrects this to William Walker. The first account is the true one. In Palmer's edition of the work published in 1802, the name is given as William Walker. The late Mr. J. E. Bailey once told me that the earlier edition of Calamy is much to be preferred to Palmer's, being often more reliable, a judgment which my own researches lead me to think is correct. Palmer's, however, is handier and often very useful, because of the additional information which it contains.

³ "Newcome's Diary" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xviii.), p. 41.

near Chorley, where he laboured until his death.¹ Oliver Heywood, in his diary under date Thursday, April 4th, 1672, tells about keeping "a fast at John Hulton's, Newton-heath,"² in conjunction with Mr. Newcome, of Manchester. It appears that Mr. Heywood was a not infrequent visitor to these parts, and in his "Northowram Register" are some entries of persons connected with Newton Heath, which fact witnesses to his interest therein. Here is one:—

Mr. Hulme, schoolmaster at Newton Heath, died suddenly September 4, 1679, aged 70.³

It is not certain⁴ who immediately succeeded Mr. Walker, but probably it was the Rev. Mr. Lawton, who preached the funeral sermon of the Rev. Thomas Pyke, in August, 1676, being then the minister of Newton Heath. Mr. Newcome refers to his death thus:—"February 28th [1688]. Honest Mr. Lawton, minister of Newton Heath Chapel, died this day."⁵ From this extract it

¹ In volume iii. of this work I have stated my inability to identify the ministerial Walkers, of whom there appear to be several in the 17th century. Much earlier writers seem to have experienced the same difficulty as myself. Calamy and the editor of the "Manchester Socinian Controversy" confuse William Walker with his son John Walker, and Dr. Halley does the same. Booker, in his "History of Didsbury and Chorlton Chapels" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxii.), mentions the Rev. John Walker, M.A., who was succeeded as curate of Didsbury Chapel, in 1685, by the Rev. Peter Shaw; and Mr. W. A. Shaw, in his notes on the ministers of the Manchester Classis (Chetham Society Publications, New Series, vol. xxiv., p. 448), leaves much in doubt.

² "Heywood's Diaries," by J. H. Turner, vol. i., p. 288.

³ Page 74. Was this Mr. Hulme, or Holme, any relation of the Rev. James Holme, born in the parish of Rochdale, assistant for some time to the Rev. John Angier, of Denton, who died at Kendal, a Nonconformist minister, in November, 1688, aged fifty-eight years?

⁴ I have experienced more difficulty in collecting information about Dob Lane Chapel than in any other case. All documents seem to have disappeared, and the sketch here presented is no doubt incomplete, and possibly in some particulars inaccurate. I have had most generous help in making it what it is from the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., Principal of the Unitarian Home Missionary College; and from Messrs. R. P. Wright, Dob Lane, and T. F. Robinson, Moston, one of the chapel trustees.

⁵ "Autobiography of Henry Newcome" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvii), p. 307.

appears that the Nonconformists had regained possession of the chapel from which Mr. Walker had been ejected, retaining it,¹ I imagine, until the erection of the building in Dob Lane, about 1698.²

¹ Probably not without break. Oliver Heywood, in his diary under date August 5, 1683, says:—"Sunday, having refused many motions of preaching, and intending to go to Newton Heath and to preach at Mr. T. Leech's after Mr. L. sent me word that Mr. Loten [Mr. Lawton, the Nonconformist minister] was sent for into Staffordshire to his dying mother. Went that morning, so nobody was there. I and my wife heard Mr. Hide, at Salford, in forenoon. We went to church in the afternoon; heard Mr. Gips, of Bury. He preached well. After that we rode to Mr. T. Leech's, at Newton Heath. There I preached to his family, and a few more. Lodged there." (Turner's "Yorkshire Genealogist" for July, 1890, p. 255.) This was the year when warrants were issued everywhere against the Nonconformist preachers, and it would seem that Mr. Lawton, for the time being, was silenced; at any rate that the chapel at Newton Heath was not in his hands to offer to his friend Oliver Heywood, and he must preach in the house of Thomas Leech.

² This is the date usually given, but it is only approximate. Mr. T. F. Robinson gives the following extracts from the trust deeds of the chapel, which are held by Mr. R. D. Darbshire, of Manchester, solicitor, and a trustee of the chapel. The first trust deed is dated 24th May, 1698, and is the conveyance of the land (upon which the chapel was afterwards built) from "James Heape, of Failsworth, blacksmith, and Sarah, widow of James, his father, of the first part, to Nathaniel Scholes, of Salford, clerk; Joseph Leech, of Newton, chapman; Joseph Clegge, of Newton, gentleman; James Marlor, of Newton, chapman; Henry Hardman, of Droylsden, yeoman, of the second part." The second trust deed is dated 30th March, 1706, and recites: "James Marlor and Ralph Smith, of the first part, Joseph Heywood, of Newton, clerk; Joseph Clegge, eldest son of Joseph Clegge, of Newton; John Leech, of Manchester, gentleman; Samuel Leech, of Manchester, chapman; Adam Smith, of Failsworth; James Hardman, of Droylsden; John Clough, of Failsworth; Samuel Taylor, jr., of Moston, yeoman; John Robinson, of Moston, yeoman; and James Newton, of Woodhouses, Ashton, linen weaver." It further states: "The conveyance of 1698, and that since the conveyance so made through the contributions and at the charge of several persons inhabiting the several townships or hamlets of Failsworth, Newton, Droylsden, and Moston, and several other persons, there hath heretofore been erected on the said land a certain building containing three bays, wherein several pews and seats have been made, and wherein several inhabitants of the townships have and do usually assemble and meet together for the exercise of religious worship, after the way of Protestant dissent. Trusts declared permit the edifice to be used for a place of meeting of Protestant Dissenters for the public exercise of

Previous to this, however, in 1694, the Rev. Nehemiah Scholes, or Scoles, was labouring here.¹ He was the son of the Rev. Jeremiah Scholes, and grandson of George Scholes, of Salford. Jeremiah Scholes was baptised at Manchester Parish Church, June 14th, 1629, minister at Stretford, 1655-7, ejected from Norton, in Derbyshire, in 1662, and buried at Manchester, April 27th, 1685. His wife was Deborah, daughter of the Rev. Nathaniel Rathband, M.A. Mr. Newcome had a great affection for Mr. Scholes, senior, though as a preacher he was "tedious and oft unintelligible."² He records his death thus: "April 27th, Monday [1685]. Precious, learned, modest, pious Mr. Scoles died."³

Nehemiah Scholes was a student in Mr. Frankland's Academy, at Natland, in 1682, and settled at Newton Heath some time before

religious worship, according to the liberty of the Toleration Act." To this may be added the following note, extracted by Mr. Robinson from a local history, written by the late Mr. Joseph Barratt, a trustee of the chapel:—"The Rev. Mr. Walker and his hearers assembled for many years in a barn at Culcheth (Newton Heath). In 1698 land was obtained from James Heape, blacksmith, of Failsworth, on which the chapel was built. The first trust deed was dated 24th May, 1698. In the old register belonging to the chapel there are registers of baptisms as early as 1690."

¹ Mr. W. A. Shaw ("Manchester Classis," Chetham Society, New Series, vol. xxiv., p. 423) mentions the Rev. Wm. Coleburne as one of the Newton ministers, concerning whom he gives the following information:—"Son of Henry Coleburne, Chandler, of Ratcliffe Bridge (and of Bury), Lancashire; school, private, at Bury, Lancashire; admitted Sizar, St. John's, Cambridge, 8th May, 1652; presented himself for ordination, July, 1657, to the church at Denton (assistant to Angier), but immediately after moved for Ellenbrook, and appears as representing it, March, 1657-8; conformed [*i.e.*, was in possession] at the Restoration, but in Angier's *Diary* he appears as under arrest in July, 1663. Occurs as minister of Newton, 1687; and there end of 1692; buried there 1693." From the two following extracts, from the "Northowram Register," I am inclined to think that Mr. Shaw has made some mistake, or at any rate left matters respecting William Coleburne less clear than they should be:—"Mr. Henry Coulburn, of Radclife Bridge, in Lanc., bur. Mar., 1690, aged 49." "Mr. William Colburn, Parson, of Mottram, buried there June 9, 97; aged 66." How were these related to their namesakes in Mr. Shaw's extract? He does not state his authority for fixing William Coleburne at Newton Heath.

² "Autobiography," p. 306.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

1694. His name ceases to appear in the Minutes of the United Brethren after April, 1697, and about that time he removed to Macclesfield,¹ where he continued his ministrations until his death, October, 1702, aged thirty-seven years.

Matthew Henry laments his death thus :—

Oct. 10. 1702. I hear that my worthy friend and dear brother Mr. Scoles, of Macclesfield, died last Friday. He was almost three years younger than ; a very ingenious man, a plain preacher, and very serious and affectionate in all his performances. He met with affliction in his marriage, which occasioned some unevenness in his temper, but he was a man of true piety and integrity; he died of a palsy, in conjunction with other distempers; his affliction had broken his spirit very much. The Lord prepare me to go after. His father was a learned Godly minister in Manchester.²

The name of the Rev. Joseph Heywood appears in the deed of 1706 as "clerk" of Newton, and probably he was the first minister of Dob Lane Chapel. In the Minutes of the United Brethren, under date August 13th, 1700, a Mr. Heywood appears amongst the ministers of the Manchester District. Now, as the Rev. John Heywood had not then settled at Blackley,³ and as all the churches in the district were represented by other ministers, it is more than likely that this was the Dob Lane minister. The date of his settlement would be about 1699, or the beginning of 1700, and I imagine he removed to Stand about 1710.⁴

The next minister⁵ concerning whom I have information is

¹ His name appears in the deed of 1698, and he is described as of Salford, clerk. If actually minister of Newton Heath then, his removal must have been immediately after. In the Minutes of the United Brethren (Manchester Classis, Chetham Society Series, vol. xxiv., p. 357), under date August 4, 1696, there is the following: "The case of a minister's removal from his people when called to some other place was largely discussed, and the case of Mr. Scholes in particular was referred to Mr. Angier and Mr. Jolley, of Attercliffe, upon a hearing of the people of Newton." As stated in the text, his name ceases to appear in the minutes after the following April.

² "Memoirs of the Rev. M. Henry," by J. B. Williams, F.S.A., p. 260.

³ Vide ante p. 33.

⁴ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁵ Mr. Gordon, on the authority of Walter Wilson's MSS., gives the name of a Mr. Swinton, who, it is said, died May 1, 1709. Griffith Swinton was minister at the Episcopal Chapel, signing a communication as such for

the Rev. William Perkins, who, like Mr. Scholes, was educated by Mr. Frankland. He was a student when the Academy was at Rathmell in 1697. Where he settled on the completion of his training, and the date of the commencement of his ministry at Dob Lane Chapel, I have not ascertained. His labours here terminated with his death, November, 1724.¹ It was during his ministry, on July 25th, 1715, that Dob Lane Chapel was sacked by the Sacheverel rioters. The following depositions relating to the matter are of interest:—

James Marlor, of Failsworth, within the parish of Manchester, chapman, aged 54 years, being sworn and exa'i'ed, saith that since his ma'tyes [accession], to witt, on the 25th day of July in that yeare, about eleven of the clock in the night, and before the first day of August in the yeare, 1715, of that day, this depon^t being then in bed in his dwelling house adjoining to the yard of the Chappell or meeting house in Failsworth aforesaid used for divine worship by Protestant dissenters did hear people come with great shouts to the said meeting house ; and this Depon^t rising out of his bed was attentive to heare what they did and accordingly heard them knocking within the said Meeting house and shouting Down with the rump; and as this Depon^t believes the said Mobb or Rabble continued in the same riotous man'er about two hours, and then returned with a great noise and shouts. And saith the next morning he went into the said meeting house to view what dam'age had been done, and accordingly found the door hinges broken down and the pulpit, seats, and windows broken or pulled down; but did not take any particular account of the dam'age. (Signed),

JAMES MARLOR.

Samuel Taylor, sen of Moston, in the County of Lanc', yeoman, aged about 62 years, being sworne and exa'i'ed saith he hath been employed to buy materialls and employ workmen to repair the damages done to the meeting house in Failsworth by the riotts in July, 1715, and saith he hath paid and disburst upon that account the sum'e of 10^{li} 12 : 1½; and believes that

Bishop Gastrell in 1717. In the "Northowram Register" (p. 247) is the following entry respecting the burial of his wife:—"Mr. Swinton, minr., at Newton Chapel, near Manchester, buried his wife Apr. 29 [1709]." This date almost exactly corresponds with the one given by Mr. Wilson, and has probably led him to confuse the one with the other. I do not think there was any minister at Dob Lane Chapel named Swinton.

¹ Vide "Northowram Register," p. 292. Mr. Gordon, on the authority of Dr. Evans's contemporary list, says that Mr. Perkins was minister from 1713 to 1719, when he removed; if so, he probably returned after Mr. Knight, and ministered until his death in 1724.

although the said meeting house may in some particular be made better than it was before the riots, yet it is not so good in other particulars. And likewise expended 17^{li} 9^s 9^d in guarding the said meeting house and in treating some Riotters by way of prevention to save the pulling down thereof. . . .

(Signed) SAMLE TAYLOR.¹

The successor to Mr. Perkins was the Rev. Henry Knight, who had followed the Rev. Samuel Bourn at Crook, near Kendal, about 1720. Thence he removed to Newton Heath, and subsequently, I imagine, was at Cross Street (now Sale) in Cheshire.² His successor was the Rev. Benjamin Sandford³ from 1740 to 1744. He removed from Dob Lane to Ormskirk, where he laboured until his death, June 18th, 1765.⁴ The Rev. Titus Cordingley, born October 18th, 1721, and who had previously laboured at Whitworth, near Rochdale, followed in 1745. He removed to Hull about 1756,⁵ where he remained until his death.

The Rev. R. Robinson, D.D., educated at the Plaisterers' Hall, was immediately chosen as Mr. Cordingley's successor. He had previously been at Congleton and Dukinfield. Whilst at the former place he preached a sermon against "Popish Projectors," and

¹ "Palatine Note Book" for November, 1882, p. 243.

² Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity." Mr. Gordon says that Mr Knight was at Dob Lane in 1719. I doubt if that is correct, as it was about that year that he entered upon duty at Crook. It is doubtful also if Mr. Perkins ever removed from Newton Heath until taken away by death, though Dr. Evans's list says he did.

³ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity." The reader will note a discrepancy between this date and the one copied from the brass plate in the Unitarian Chapel at Ormskirk, and given in volume iv. of this work. The one in the text is from the Ormskirk Parish Church Register. The inscription on the brass plate was scarcely legible, and it is possible that in copying an error has crept in. Since the copy was taken the chapel has been let for dancing, and all the tablets inside have been covered over, so that a fresh copy could not be taken. This had been written when the Rev. Alexander Gordon in a letter said: "About Sandford you are right [*i.e.*, as to 1770 being the date of his death]. I have looked at a rubbing of his brass, and also at a collection of his sermons, which includes one of 1766." What is the meaning of the entry in the Register?

⁴ Miall ("Congregationalism in Yorkshire") mentions a Mr. Sandford, minister at Pontefract in 1715, who died in 1746.

⁵ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

drew up a small Scripture Catechism, both of which were published. From Congleton Dr. Robinson received what he called a “causeless dismissal,” having forfeited the good opinion of the people because “a beggar coming to his door one day was so importunate as almost to refuse to depart without relief, in consequence of which Mr. Robinson sent for a constable and had him whipped at his own gate.” From 1752 to 1755 he laboured at Dukinfield, removing thence to Dob Lane in the latter year. Here he preached, and afterwards printed, two sermons, “occasioned by the then high price of corn,” and this drew upon him the “animosity of the interested and rich speculators in that commodity.” Another “causeless dismissal” towards the close of 1774 led to his publication of a tract: “The Doctrine of Absolute Submission Discussed, or the natural right claimed by some Dissenters to dismiss their ministers at pleasure, Exposed as a practice produced by principles of unrestrained liberty, though contrary to the Dictates of Reason and Revelation.” For some time previous to this the chapel had been closed and he retained possession of the key, but in that year he gave it up to the trustees, and went to reside at Barrack Hill House, near Stockport, where he purchased land and a farm house. His passion for publicity as an author led him to enter “into an agreement with a Manchester printer, of the name of Whitworth, to edit for him a copy of the Bible. It was to appear in numbers, and he procured a diploma of D.D., that his name might come before the public with more advantage in the title-page of the work.” His biographer says:—

At his death he left directions that his body should be kept one month before its interment, and that his coffin should be constructed with a movable pane of glass over his face, which was to be carefully watched to see whether it was breathed upon. These requisitions were literally complied with. According to his express desire, he was buried in his orchard, a short distance from his residence, and a square brick building was raised over his tomb, which is yet to be seen.¹

The Rev. Pendlebury Houghton, who had for a short time been Tutor at Warrington Academy, became the minister in 1779,

¹ “Monthly Repository” for 1823, p. 682; also “Nonconformity in Cheshire” (Urwick), p. 330.

and continued until 1781, when he removed to Shrewsbury.¹ The Rev. William Hawkes, son of the Rev. William Hawkes, of Birmingham, followed in 1781, and removed to Bolton in 1785.² The next minister was the Rev. Richard Aubrey, who was born at Swansea, June 19th, 1760, and educated for the ministry at Hoxton. In June, 1782, he was appointed librarian to Dr. Williams's Library, retaining the position until October, 1786. From 1786 to 1787 he laboured at Dob Lane, removing thence to Stand, near Manchester, and subsequently to Gloucester and Swansea. He died at the latter place, August 15th, 1836. In an obituary notice of him by his son, Richard Aubrey, Esq., of Swansea, no reference is made to his father's ministry at Dob Lane.³ After the removal of Mr. Aubrey, Dob Lane was supplied for several years, partly by tutors and partly by students from the Manchester Academy. The first amongst these was the Rev. Lewis Loyd. He was born January 1st, 1767, at Cwm-y-to, near Llandovery, and admitted a student into the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, in 1785. He had been led to expect the appointment of Classical and Mathematical Tutor there in succession to Mr. Thomas Lloyd, but disappointed in the matter he sought admission to the Manchester Academy on the advice of the Rev. Richard Aubrey. In his second year at the Academy, in 1790, he became Assistant Tutor in Classics, having charge of the Dob Lane congregation as well. In a brief sketch of the cause here, by Mr. R. P. Wright, is the following passage:—

Long before the highway from Manchester to Oldham was made, Dob Lane was only reached by a bridle path through the fields, the chapel itself lying secluded among the trees, and the lane, a very narrow one between hedges, continued up to Watchcote, Failsworth. Along this road, through the fields from Manchester, was to be seen coming to chapel every Sunday, on a white Welsh pony, the Rev. Lewis Loyd, he being at that time Assistant Classical Tutor at Manchester New College.

In 1792 Mr. Loyd withdrew from the ministry, became a rich

¹ Vide vols iv. and vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity;" also "Christian Reformer" for 1836, p. 746.

banker, and died in his 91st year, at his residence, Overstone Park, near Northampton, May 13th, 1858. His only son, Mr. Samuel Jones¹ Loyd, was elevated to the Peerage in 1850 as Baron Overstone. Mr. Loyd was succeeded in the tutorship of the Academy and ministry of Dob Lane by the Rev. William Stevenson. He was educated at Daventry, and held his double post at Manchester from 1792 to 1796. Subsequently he became private secretary to Lord Lauderdale.² The Rev. Titus Baron, educated at Manchester Academy, whilst a student there, supplied the pulpit at Dob Lane. He died at Blackpool in September, 1799, and is described as minister of Dob Lane, but probably he was not more than a supply. The Rev. John Bull (afterwards John Bull Bristowe), another Manchester Academy student, supplied Dob Lane from 1799 to 1800. His subsequent pastorates were at Mansfield, Hinckley, Ringwood, Sidmouth, Topsham, and Shepton Mallet. He died at the latter place in the midst of his pastoral duties, on the 16th of March, 1854, at the age of eighty years. A third Manchester Academy student, the Rev. William Marshall, took charge of the congregation from 1800 to 1801. He was the minister of the Rochdale congregation from 1806 to 1810, afterwards at St. Albans, and died on December 5th, 1849, aged seventy-three years. The pulpit was next supplied, from 1801 to 1803, by the Rev. George Walker, F.R.S., president of the Manchester Academy.³ With Mr. Walker ends the list of Academy supplies, and settled pastorates are renewed with the Rev. David L. Jones. He was educated at the Manchester Academy⁴ during the years 1800 to 1803, settling at Dob Lane on the completion of his college

¹ Mr. Lewis Loyd's wife was Miss Jones, sister to Samuel and William Jones, of Manchester, and granddaughter to the Rev. Joseph Mottershead. It was his acquaintance with this family which opened up the way to wealth, and to his renunciation of the ministry for a commercial life.

² Mr. Stevenson was the father of Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, the novelist, and wife of the Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., the eminent minister for many years of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester.

³ The reader is referred to vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for a full account of this excellent man. Vide also vol. i.

⁴ In the Roll of Students educated at the Academy, which was published in 1868, Mr. Jones's name is not given. The information has been supplied by Mr. Gordon.

course. He remained until 1825, when he died,¹ being succeeded in 1828 by the Rev. George Buckland. He retained the pastorate only about a year, being followed in 1830 by the Rev. Joseph Ashton, who removed to Preston after a few months.² The Rev. James Taylor, from Rivington, began his labours here about 1832, and continued them until 1847. He was succeeded by the Rev. James Hibbert in that year, who remained until 1851, when he resigned, and Mr. Taylor resumed the charge in 1852. He withdrew from the ministry in 1854, and died on the 6th of April, 1862.³ The Rev. Abraham Lunn, educated at the Belfast Academical Institution, and who has been previously mentioned in connection with Blackley, was at Dob Lane from 1854 to 1858.⁴ The Rev. Joseph Freeston, originally a schoolmaster, followed Mr. Lunn in the year of his removal, and remained until 1864. Subsequently he was minister at Rochdale (Clover Street), Blackley,⁵ and Stalybridge. For three years after Mr. Freeston the pulpit was occupied by "supplies and lay preachers." In 1867 the Rev. William George Cadman, who had been educated at the Unitarian Home Missionary College, became the minister. He left in 1872, and went to Oldham Road, Manchester, where he remained until June, 1893, when he became the minister of Mansford Street Mission, London. His successor, in 1873, was the Rev. R. H. Cotton, B.A., educated at Rawdon College. He remained but a short time, and was followed by the Rev. R. H. Gibson, B.A., as a supply for six months. In 1875 the Rev. Halliwell Thomas assumed the pastorate. He was educated at the Unitarian Home Missionary College, and had previously laboured at Bridport and Ballymena, Co. Antrim. He removed from Dob Lane to Stockton in 1885, and is now labouring at Doncaster. The present minister is the Rev. George Knight, whose place of education was Rawdon College, and previous pastorates were at the Baptist Chapel, Stourbridge, and the Unitarian Chapels at Sheffield and Gloucester. He entered upon duty

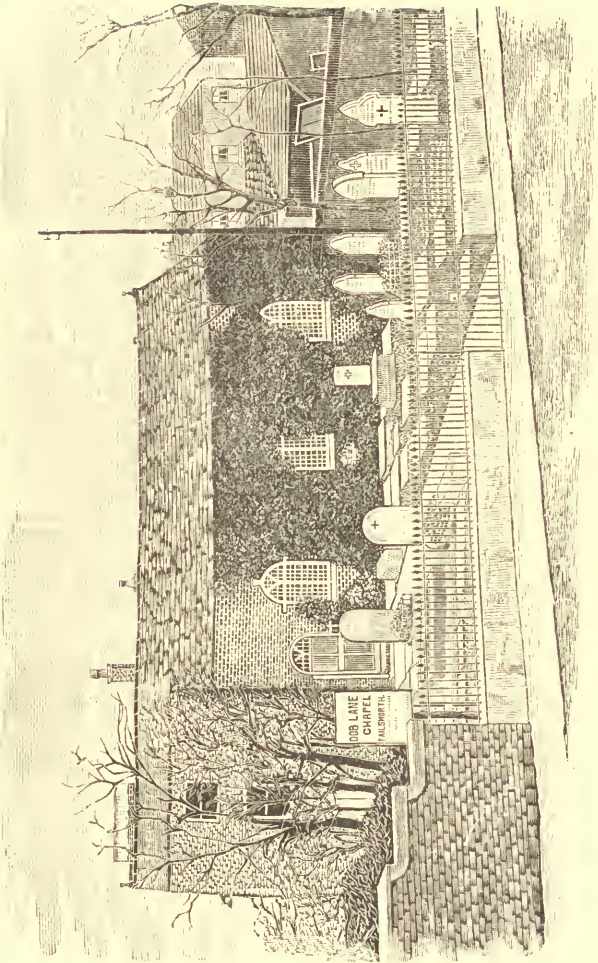
¹ His wife, Lydia Jones, died April 21st, 1838, aged fifty-eight years.

² Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁴ Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁵ Vide ante p. 36, and vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."



DOB LANE OLD CHAPEL.

here in August, 1885. The old chapel was a neat and picturesque structure with its ivy covered walls. The sacred edifice in which the congregation now worships was erected upon the old foundations at the front to avoid disturbing the graves inside the old chapel, the extension being secured by absorbing the site of the old chapel house, and part of the school-yard at the back. The foundation stone was laid in May, 1878, by Mr. Harry Rawson, one of the trustees, and the building was opened for worship in March of the following year. It stands a little to the left of the main road from Manchester to Oldham, and will seat about 300 people. Amongst the objects of interest within is a beautiful stained glass window, at the foot of which runs the following inscription :—

Dedicated to the memory of the Rev. James Taylor, pastor from 1832 to 1847, and from 1852 to 1854, by his daughters, Eleanor and Katherine 1879.

On the left of the chapel is the new school, the memorial stone of which was laid by "Charles Ernest Schwann, M.P., 2nd April, 1887," and behind is the old one¹ still standing, erected in 1846 and enlarged in 1860. The chapel and the old school behind it are in Failsworth, whilst the new school is in Newton Heath, the boundary of Failsworth and Newton Heath running between. The chapel and school form two sides of a square fronting Oldham Road, and with the trees in the old graveyard and in front of the school present a very pleasing appearance. The congregation has been Unitarian for many years.

VI.—GORTON PROTESTANT DISSENTERS' CHAPEL.

THE old Nonconformist foundation at Gorton, some three miles out of Manchester, on the way to Denton, originated, it is gene-

¹ The Sunday School at Dob Lane, it is said, originated with the Rev. Benjamin Goodier, who was born at Hollinwood, near Oldham, April 25, 1793. He attended the ministry of Mr. Jones, at Dob Lane, and "instituted a meeting for the improvement of the youth of the congregation assembling there" ("Monthly Repository" for 1819, p. 69.)

rally believed, with the Rev. William Leigh, the ejected minister of Gorton Chapel. Previous to him, however, the chapelry had been served by a succession of honourable men of Puritan and Nonconformist spirit, brief notices of whom must be given if this account is to have completeness. Gorton Chapel existed at least in 1570, when its registers commence; but the first minister with whom we are concerned was the Rev. John Wigan, who removed from Gorton to Birch in 1646. He was of the Independent persuasion, and Adam Martindale speaks about the new opinions "tugging hard at Gorton to get in there during the days of Mr. Wigan, my predecessor, who spent his afternoone's sermons to promote it, and meeting with remoras too weighty to be removed, he was then using all his endeavours to get it up at Birch, which in time he effected."¹ His Presbyterian brethren had considerable difficulty with him on account of his views, as appears from the following, dated June 9th, 1647:—

The members of y^e last classis appointed to deal with Mr. Wigan returned answer that the said Mr. Wigan was not desirous to meet them as members of a class, but as fellow brethren; promised to return his scruples to you in writing; not yet done.

In 1650 he was the minister at Birch, and the Parliamentary Commissioners described him as a "painfull, Godly, preachinge Minister," who had had some "mainteynce out of the Sequestracions; but all orders expireinge at Mydsomer, one thousand six hundred and fifty, there is noe meanes knowne for them but the controbucon of the people."² Mr. Wigan appears to have left Birch shortly after this, and to have entered the army, where he became a major. Adam Martindale has another interesting passage respecting him, who, when describing the events which succeeded the death of Charles I., says:—

Diverse of the ministers of the classis hurried about and imprisoned at Liverpool and Ormeskirke, till it came even to peaceable Mr. Angier. Those of Manchester, viz., Mr. Heyrick and Mr. Hollinworth, put to pensions (if they got them), the college lands being sold, and the college itself to Mr.

¹ "Life of Adam Martindale" (Chetham Society Series, vol. iv.), p. 61.

² "Commonwealth Church Survey" (Record Society Series, vol. i.), p. 13.

Wigan, who now being turned antipædobaptist, and I know not what more, made a barne there into a chappell, where he and many of his perswasion preached doctrine diametrically opposite to the ministers' perswasion under their very nose.¹

As already intimated, Mr. Wigan was succeeded at Gorton by the Rev. Adam Martindale. He was born in September, 1623, near Prescot, and educated first at St. Helens School, then Rainford. After holding the position of schoolmaster for some time he was led, after much hesitation, into the ministry. Most ministers can understand and sympathise with his condition of mind, who, when he was told by a friend that he must take duty on the coming Sabbath, with the choice of one of three places, said:—

I expostulated with him for his rashness; but when nothing would excuse me, I told him St. Helens was very inconvenient for me to begin at, being amongst my old neighbours, where I was a school-boy not six years before; Hyton not much fitter, being a place where many knew me, and supplied by Mr. Bell, one of the most famed preachers in the county. Middleton was further off, where few knew me, and the parson there was an honest, humble man (considering his high birth), but accounted an exceeding meane preacher, and his assistant (my old third master), in whose stead I was to go, much weaker than he. Here, if any where, I hoped my pains might find acceptance, and there was hope I needed to preach but once.²

In the month of April, 1646, Mr. Martindale accepted the invitation of the Gorton people to become their minister, and went "to live amongst them in Openshaw, a little towne in that chapellrie." On the 31st of December, 1646, he married Elizabeth Hall, second daughter of Mr. John Hall, of the Clock House, in Droylsden, whose wife subsequently married Major Jollie. Martindale remained but a short time at Gorton, being perplexed mainly by the divided character of the congregation respecting matters of church government, and in 1648 he removed to Rostherne, in Cheshire. At this place he laboured until his ejection in 1662, after which he was a sufferer and wanderer for many years like most of his Nonconformist brethren.³ He died

¹ "Life of Adam Martindale," p. 75.

² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

at Leigh, and in the Parish Register of Rostherne Church is the following entry :—

“Sepulturæ anno Dom. 1686. Mr. Adam Martindale, of Leigh, bur. Septem. 21.”

The Rev. David Dury, a native of Scotland, followed Mr. Martindale at Gorton in 1648. He was ordained here on June 27th, 1649, and appears as minister until August, 1650. He was subsequently silenced at Honley, and after a time returned to Scotland. His name occurs under date February 16th, 1692, in the Burial Register of Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh. The Rev. Thomas Norman, whose father of the same name had been minister at Gorton from 1617 to 1622, had charge of the place from November, 1650, to June, 1651. In 1655 he was at Newton-in-Makerfield. The Rev. Zachariah Taylor laboured here from December, 1651, to April, 1653, being afterwards ejected from Rochdale, in 1662, where he had acted as assistant to the Rev. Robert Bath.¹ The Rev. Robert Seddon, M.A., is mentioned as expectant at Gorton, in July, 1653, and at this place he was ordained minister, June 14th, 1654. He remained until April, 1656, was ejected from Langley, in Derbyshire, in 1662, and subsequently ministered at Bolton.²

We are now led up to the Rev. William Leigh, who was born about 1614, minister of Blackrod 1641-2, and of Newchurch (Culcheth) from 1649 to 1654. He first appears in connection with Gorton in November, 1656, and, as previously stated, was ejected from this place in 1662 by the Act of Uniformity.³ He was buried at Denton Chapel on January 11th, 1665-6; on which occasion Mr. Angier preached. Calamy says that he was “a serious, single-hearted man; of good abilities, and very laborious in the work of the ministry. For some years he was grievously

¹ Vide vol. iii., of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”

² Ibid.

³ The Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A., to whom I am indebted for many hints respecting these old foundations, thinks it is doubtful whether Mr. Leigh was ever ejected. It is clear that Calamy has partly confused him with the Rev. William Leigh, M.A., who died on or before August 5, 1662. This, however, is not sufficient to set Calamy quite aside.

afflicted with stone, which at last cut him off.”¹ The Rev. John Jollie appears to have taken charge of the congregation after Mr. Leigh, and to have preached at least occasionally in the chapel. He was the son of Major Jollie and brother of the Rev. Thomas Jollie, of Altham and Wymondhouses, near Clitheroe. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and for a time assisted the Rev. John Angier at Denton. Ejected from Norbury, in Cheshire, by the Act of Uniformity, he appears at Gorton about 1669. The following passage from Mr. Booker’s pen makes this clear:—

From an unpublished memorandum of the celebrated Henry Newcome we learn that one Mr. Ogden had, a few years previously, twice officiated at the adjacent chapel of Gorton, being at the time on a visit in Manchester. “On the Lord’s Day, January 2nd, 1669 (1670),” says Newcome: “Mr. Ogden, a stranger that has for several weeks been in Manchester in pretence to study at the Library, came with John Broxup to Gorton, and said he was sent there by the warden to preach.” For one cause or other there was an unwillingness on the part of the inhabitants to receive him, and a distrust in the authenticity of his mission. Two or three of the congregation waited upon the warden to ascertain whether he had sent Mr. Ogden. The warden in reply said that he had not sent him, but had given his consent on hearing that some of the people wished to have him. On the following Sunday Mr. Ogden’s visit was repeated, being accompanied on this occasion by Anson, an attorney, and other persons from Manchester. Finding the pulpit already occupied by Mr. Jolly, who refused to give way, he retired to an alehouse hard by, where he stayed until the service was over. This occurrence was much discussed, and led to Mr. Jolly being summoned to London. Whatever was the result of the enquiry we hear of no more visits to Gorton.²

Mr. Jollie continued to reside at Gorton until his death, serving the congregation as opportunity permitted, preaching probably in the chapel and in his own house.³ He died on the 16th of June, 1682, and was buried at Oldham. Henry Newcome says:—

¹ “Nonconformist’s Memorial” (1802), vol. ii., p. 262.

² “History of the Ancient Chapel of Denton” (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxxviii.), p. 85.

³ It ought to be said that it is open to question whether Mr. Jollie was ever actual minister at Gorton Chapel, though I am inclined to think he was. The period, however, covered by his residence at Gorton was the period when dissent was under a cloud and much uncertainty hangs over it.

June 28th. I preached a sermon on the account of the death of that honest, laborious, and useful man, Mr. John Jollie, at his house in Gorton, on Phil. ii., 20.¹

The Rev. Thomas Jollie, in his Church Book, thus refers to his brother's death :—" 1682. Mr. Jollie died this year. He was an active servant of Christ. Taken ill one morning, he died the next." His son, the Rev. John Jollie, succeeded his uncle, Thomas Jollie, in the pastorate of Wymondhouses.² The next minister of whom I have information was the Rev. Thomas Dickenson, who was educated by the Rev. Richard Frankland, and ordained at Stand, May 24th, 1694, Messrs. Newcome, Eaton, and Angier being the principal ordainers.³ He was at that time minister at Gorton, where he remained until 1702, when he removed to Northowram as Oliver Heywood's successor. At this place he laboured until his death, and in the "Northowram Register," which he continued after Mr. Heywood's decease, is the following notice of his own end :—

The Revd. Mr. Thomas Dickenson, minister at Northouram, Dyed 26th December, 1743, aged 73, abt one in the morning. Nature being far spent, a visible decay appeared abt July or August, wch increased gradually till the time of his death. He preached at Gorton Chappel, in Lancashire; ordained, May 24th, 1694; removed to Northouram in the year 1702; about 42 years at Northouram. He was an Eminent, usefull, faithfull Minister or God's word, a meek & humble Xtian, an affectionate & tender Parent, a loving husband, a sincere Friend & social neighbour, a cheerful companion, very temperate, had an uncommon memory, lived well, and dyed looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto Eternity.⁴

He was buried at Northowram Chapel, and his wife Hannah died in London, July 28th, 1765. Two sermons which he preached on the death of the Rev. Thomas Whitaker, A.M., of Leeds, were afterwards published, along with a memoir, by the Rev. T. Jollie, and two other sermons by the Rev. T. Bradbury.

¹ "Autobiography" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvii.), p. 242.

² The reader is referred to vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for a notice of the Jollie family of a somewhat extended character.

³ Hunter's "Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 379, note.

⁴ Page 335.

It is probable that the Nonconformists retained some sort of hold upon the Episcopal Chapel until the days of Dickenson, but after his time a change took place. There is no certain information as to the date of the erection of the chapel for Nonconformist worship, but 1703 is generally taken. It would therefore be immediately after Mr. Dickenson's removal, and possibly before a successor was appointed. The sitting accommodation was for about 200, though Dr. Evans gives the congregation as 250, of whom twenty-three were county voters.

The next known minister was the Rev. Nehemiah Reyner, who settled at Gorton sometime before 1712, in which year the "Northowram Register" records his marriage: "Mr. Nehemiah Reyner, Minr. at Gorton, and Mrs. Jane Eaton, mar. Nov. 20, 1712."¹ He removed about 1731 to Cross Street, Cheshire, for in May of that year "it was agreed that, upon Mr. Nehemiah Reyner's removal to Cross Street, the Rev. Mr. Gardiner, Mr. Mottershead, and Mr. Jones shall join in a letter to y^e London ministers to procure the money formerly allowed to that place, which for some time has been discontinued."² In August, 1738, Mr. Reyner appears to have been excluded from the Ministerial Association, but at a meeting held May 6th, 1740, the censure was revoked, and he was owned as a brother. His successor was the Rev. Samuel Hanson, who entered upon duty in 1732. He had previously been at Ossett, in Yorkshire, for several years, where he married, February 1st, 1727, at Wakefield, Mrs. Mary Jepson, the sister-in-law of the Rev. Thomas Dickenson. In 1737 the Gorton congregation drew up a document, still in existence, addressed—"To all our Christian Friends and Brethren." It was an appeal for help to lessen the burden on a certain estate belonging to the chapel, and one of the reasons given for the appeal is thus stated:—

That we are some of us under particular obligations to Mr. Hanson, our Pastor, who promised him at his coming to settle among us to do all we cou'd ourselves, and use what Interest we had among our Christian Friends, to bring the s^d Estate into a Condition for his Encouragement: That, as he

¹ Page 206.

² Urwick's "Nonconformity in Cheshire," p. 366.

has been the happy Instrument of gathering us when we were Scatter'd, and of increasing our Numbers, we are the more concern'd that his stay with Us may be easie and comfortable to him, that so he may be encouraged to continue with Us.

The appeal eventually obtained a total of £220 5s. Mr. Hanson remained until his death, and in the old graveyard is his tombstone, thus inscribed:—

Here are deposited the remains of the
 REV^D. SAMUEL HANSON,
 Born at Wyke, in the Parish of Birstall and County of York,
 who departed this life Nov. 28th, 1763,
 in the 71st year of his age, after having been
 Pastor of this Church upwards of
 Thirty-one years.
 Also, the remains of MARY, his wife,
 Daughter of Mr. Richard Foster, of Ossett,
 in the said County. She departed this
 Life Aug^t. 24th, 1760, in the 67th year of
 her age.

The Rev. John Atchison followed in 1765. He was born at Everdon, Northamptonshire, in March, 1743, and educated for the ministry at Daventry. His first and only charge was Gorton, which he held until 1778, when he resigned, owing to his "extraordinary diffidence," which prevented him from making "that public exhibition of himself which was required by the duties of his office as a Christian minister."¹ It was during his ministry in 1774 that the parsonage was built, mainly at the expense of members of the Grimshaw family. After his retirement from Gorton Mr. Atchison went to reside at Leicester, where he died February 9th, 1813. The next in the ministerial list is the Rev. William Dodge Cooper, who had previously laboured at Stand,² near Manchester, for about seven years.

The two following letters, intimating his acceptance of the invitation of the Gorton congregation, from Mr. Cooper, are interesting. They are addressed to "Mr. Robert Grimshaw,

¹ "Monthly Repository" for 1813, p. 278.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

Gorton," and have been kindly copied by the Rev. Dendy Agate, from originals in his possession :—

Dear Sir,

After what is already known by the congregation at Gorton respecting my intentions of coming to settle amongst them as their stated Minister, it should seem as though a written declaration of my acceptance of their Invitation were quite unnecessary. But lest such omission should be construed into an inattention to order, or a want of respect, I have sent with this a *written* answer to their Invitation, which I should be much obliged to you to communicate to them the first opportunity.

I am, dear Sir,

Your much obliged friend and serv^t."

Hyde,

WM. DODGE COOPER.

July 16th, 1788.

To the Congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Gorton.

My Christian Brethren,

The unanimous and hearty Invitation which you have been pleased to give me to officiate amongst you as your stated Minister is a mark of respect which calls for my sincere acknowledgments.

I am sensible it is a desirable circumstance to be connected with a people so respectable and harmonious as you have long been, and therefore with pleasure convey to you my acceptance of your kind proposal.

It is not in my power at present to fix with certainty when I shall take upon me the charge of your place; as, in consequence of my engagement with the people at Walmsley, I am under obligation to supply for them till Christmas next, unless they can meet with a person before that time agreeable to their wishes. I flatter myself, however, you will be able to procure a regular and constant supply; and if, during your vacancy, I can be of any assistance in this respect, my best endeavours shall not be wanting.

I trust that our connection, whenever it takes place, will be mutually advantageous and happy; that it will be our study and ambition to build one another up in the holy faith whereof we make profession; to walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, that so we may be established in every thing good and exemplary, and numbers may be added to the church daily of such as shall be saved, and the God of love and peace be with us.—With sincere prayers for your future comfort,

I am, my Christian brethren,

Your affectionate servant in the Gospel,

Hyde, July 16th, 1788.

WM. DODGE COOPER.

Mr. Cooper closed his ministry here with his death, and in the old graveyard is a tombstone in memory of him somewhat oddly inscribed :—

This Tomb,
 Sacred to the memory of the
 REV^D. WILLIAM DODGE COOPER,
 Thirteen years Minister of the adjacent Chapel,
 Who died June the 9th, 1801,
 In the forty-second year of his age,
 Is erected by a few friends, who,
 Although not allied to him in blood,
 Revere his Virtues and Regret his Death.
 The house of Prayer near which this tomb is rais'd,
 Hath often witness'd with what zeal he TAUGHT!
 How meek he PRAY'D! How gratefully he PRAIS'D!
 Each word, each look, with mild instruction fraught.
 A head, so cool as his! a heart so warm!
 Have seldom center'd in one human frame,
 And, 'till both TRUTH and VIRTUE cease to Charm,
 Shall many a SIGH be heav'd at COOPER'S name.

The Rev. Joseph Ramsbottom, educated at Rotherham¹ and minister at Fulwood from 1798 to 1802, held the pastorate at Gorton from June, 1802, until March, 1806, when he died. From his tombstone in the old graveyard the following inscription is taken :—

Sacred
 to the memory of
 the REV^D. JOSEPH RAMSBOTTOM,
 several years minister of this
 Congregation, who died March
 15th, 1806, aged 26 years.
 And of
 WM. BASNETT TOWNSEND his
 brother-in-law, who died June
 24th 1804. Aged 20 years.
 In life they loved and in
 death they are now for
 ever united.

The Rev. Joseph Jefferies, who had previously ministered at Topsham and Ringwood, in Hampshire, was recommended to the Gorton congregation by the Rev. Edward Higginson, of Stockport. He began his ministry on the first Sunday in April, 1807, and

¹ On the authority of the Rev. A. Gordon, M.A., not, I think, Rotherham College.

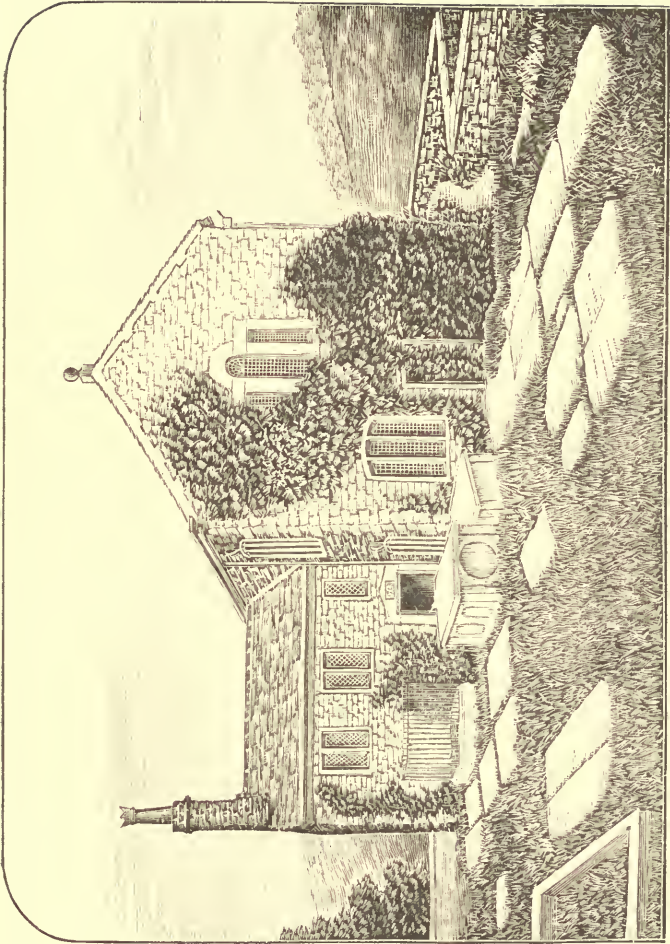
died in 1829, two years after he had resigned the pulpit.¹ During his closing years he suffered from mental trouble. The Rev. Charles Danvers Hort succeeded him. He was born at Bristol in 1807, educated at Belfast and the Manchester New College, and settled at Gorton in September, 1829. His personal friends bear the highest testimony to his character and abilities, as also to his modest and amiable temper. He left Gorton in 1836, and died at St. Patrick's Hospital, Dublin, in 1867, after being an inmate there for nearly twenty-seven years. The Rev. George Henry Wells, M.A., who was born at Warrington in 1811, educated at Glasgow, and who had previously laboured a few years at Rivington,² began his ministry at Gorton in February, 1837. He continued his labours here until June, 1881, when he withdrew from active work. This was the longest of all the Gorton ministries, and it was as fruitful as it was long. In 1863 the school was erected, and in 1871 the present handsome "Brookfield Church," the gift of the late Richard Peacock, Esq., M.P., superseded the old one. It stands fronting Hyde Road, has a tower and spire rising to the height of 150 feet, and has easy sitting accommodation for 450 people. Amongst the tablets within is one in memory of Mr. Wells, erected by his widow, thus inscribed:—

In Memory of
The Rev. GEORGE HENRY WELLS, M.A.,
For forty-four years minister of the Gospel in this place ;
Born at Warrington, April 19th, 1811 ;
Died at Bowdon, July 17th, 1888 ;
"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait on thee."—*Ps. xxv.*, 12.

At the west end of the church the congregation has placed a marble font in memory of Mr. Wells and Mr. Peacock.

¹ The Rev. Dendy Agate says that the Baptismal and Burial Registers, from November, 1827, to September, 1829, contain various entries by Benjamin Naylor, who does not appear to have been the settled minister. Was this the Rev. Benjamin Naylor, educated at Warrington, pastor of a congregation at Sheffield from 1780 to 1805, which he was obliged to relinquish owing to the failing health of his brother-in-law, who was engaged in business in Manchester, of which he came to take the oversight? He died April 12th 1846, at the age of eighty-four years.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."



GORTON OLD PROTESTANT DISSENTERS' CHAPEL.

The present minister is the Rev. Dendy Agate, B.A., educated at the Manchester New College, and whose previous pastorates were at Hunslet (Leeds) and Scarborough. He entered upon duty at Gorton in January, 1882, and to him I am indebted for much generous help in the preparation of this sketch. The old chapel stood in a hollow a few yards behind the present one, and on the other side of the brook. It has been taken down, but its middle point is indicated by a tall monument in the centre of the old graveyard. There is an interesting memorial of the past near the entrance to the lodge, in the shape of an old stone, bearing date 1703. This was the stepping stone for gentlemen who were accustomed to come long distances on horseback to the chapel for worship. The congregation is Unitarian, and has been so for many years.

VII.—OUTSIDE THE CITY: THE CIRCLE COMPLETED.

IN this section it is proposed to deal briefly with the remaining Congregational interests in the neighbourhood of Manchester, starting from the point where the previous section left us, and completing the circle from east to west, round by the south side. Those interests are somewhat numerous, and are not without attractive features, which, did space permit, might be set out in considerable detail, but it does not; besides which they are, with one or two exceptions, quite young, and have their histories still to make. Beginning, then, with Openshaw, it appears that the Rev. William Roby, pastor of Grosvenor Street Chapel, Manchester, preached here some seventy years ago, and "wished to see regular religious services established." The effort, however, was abandoned, and no further attempt made until 1864, when, guided by the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, and Mr. Alderman Thompson, now of Wilmslow, a committee of Manchester gentlemen "purchased the old chapel in Lower Openshaw, which had just been vacated by the Wesleyans on their removal to the new premises in Grey Mare Lane."¹ Beautified and repaired, it was

¹ "Bazaar Handbook," by the Rev. Robert Sutton, published in 1890.

handed over to trustees free from debt, being opened for Congregational worship in October, 1864. Neighbouring ministers and students from Lancashire College supplied the pulpit from that time up to the following May, when the Rev. R. A. Bertram, from Ancoats, was appointed minister by the Lancashire County Union. Mr. Bertram almost immediately directed his attention to Higher Openshaw, for in the autumn of 1865 the Co-operative Hall was rented and opened as a branch school, and preaching services were also conducted. The cause here was strengthened considerably by the accession on Easter Sunday, 1866, of a number of friends who had been connected with the New Connexion Chapel in Fairfield Road. On the 25th of November following Mr. Bertram closed his ministry at Openshaw; and settled at Bacup. The Rev. J. Forsyth was appointed pastor of the Lower Openshaw Church on January 20th, 1867, preaching for a few months in the morning at Higher Openshaw; the evening supply being sent by the Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., of Ashton-under-Lyne. Shortly after this the Rev. Matthew Johnston was appointed Evangelist at Higher Openshaw, but he remained only a few months, being succeeded in the autumn of 1867 by the Rev. G. Harrison. In 1870 both Mr. Forsyth and Mr. Harrison resigned, and the County Union decided to place the two stations under the care of the Rev. James Duthie, from Beaconsfield. He began his ministry in February, 1871, and immediately an effort was made in the direction of more convenient premises for Higher Openshaw. Accordingly, the memorial stone of a school chapel in Lees Street was laid by Hugh Mason, Esq., of Ashton-under-Lyne, on Saturday afternoon, April 22nd, 1871. The building, which had accommodation for about 400 people, and which cost, including land, &c., £1,397, was opened on the 8th of October following, when sermons were preached by the Revs. T. Green, M.A., and T. C. Finlayson, of Rusholme. The services were continued on subsequent dates, when the Revs. T. Willis, Grosvenor Street; Dr. Macfadyen, Chorlton Road; R. M. Davies, Oldham; and A. J. Bray, Cavendish Street, Manchester, were the preachers. On Sunday afternoon, October 22nd, 1871, a separate church was formed out of the communicants of the two stations, who had mainly up to this time been in membership with Mr. Green's

church. In 1873 it was found needful to separate the two places, and Mr. Duthie continued his pastorate at Lees Street with much success until October, 1878, when he resigned. Subsequently he became pastor of the new interest at Gorton hard by. The Rev. Robert Sutton, a student from Lancashire College, began his labours as successor to Mr. Duthie on Sunday, July 20th, 1879. The need of an enlarged chapel had been felt for some years, and a few days after Mr. Sutton's settlement a committee was formed to take the matter into consideration. On the 2nd of October, 1880, Reuben Spencer, Esq., of Manchester, laid the foundation stone, and on Thursday evening, July 14th, 1881, "amid much rejoicing, the new chapel was opened by the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, B.A., of London." In connection with other opening services the Revs. Dr. Scott, Lancashire College; Dr. Macfadyen, Chorlton Road; A. Cran, M.A., Droylsden; Dr. Mackennal, Bowdon; J. Hutchison, Ashton-under-Lyne; and W. Reid, Levenshulme, conducted services. The total cost of the new building, which seats 700 people, was £4,066, of which the sum of £2,000 remained to be raised at the opening. In 1886 all the remaining debt was removed, and immediately afterwards an enlargement of the Sunday School, &c., entailed a further outlay of £1,100, to meet which a bazaar was held in March, 1890. In 1892 the church declared itself able to dispense with assistance from the Union Funds. Mr. Sutton still pursues a ministry here, which from the first has been attended with most gratifying success.

After the separation in 1873 Lower Openshaw, for a considerable period, was worked by lay preachers, foremost amongst them being Mr. R. P. Ellis, who successfully officiated as lay pastor six years. After Mr. Ellis left, the church sank into a state of great feebleness, and remained so for some time. In January, 1887, Dr. Hodgson and a few students from Lancashire College interested themselves in the place, and rendered efficient service, which infused new life into the congregation. In 1890 the Manchester, Salford, and District Ministers and Deacons' Association appointed a committee, consisting of the Revs. T. Willis, J. W. Kiddle, and E. E. Stuttard, to confer with the executive of the church and congregation for the purpose of

strengthening Congregationalism in the neighbourhood. The result was the old building in Ashton Old Road was sold, and a school chapel erected, at a cost of £1,700, on a site within easy reach of New Ardwick, Bradford, and Lower Openshaw. The new building was opened in May, 1892, and since the opening both congregation and school have largely increased. There is land for a chapel in front of the present erection.

At the suggestion of the Manchester and Salford Ministers and Deacons' Association, in 1889, the Lees Street Church commenced Evangelistic work in Central Openshaw. A "suitable and convenient building," which had been used by the Methodist Free Church, was purchased for £850, and a further outlay of £150 became necessary to furnish and put it in good repair. A generous grant has been made each year from the funds of the County Union, and the work, which is said to be "in a hopeful condition," and to be "meeting a real want," is under the supervision of the pastor of Lees Street Church.

In March, 1880, the Rev. T. Willis, of Grosvenor Street Chapel, and other ministers, took part in the opening services of a Mission Hall, Gore Street, Gorton, capable of seating about 300 people. The Rev. James Duthie, formerly of Openshaw, was put in charge of the station, and in February, 1881, a church was formed, consisting of forty-four members. In 1884 a new school chapel was erected in Church Lane, Hyde Road, at a cost of over £1,000, with sitting accommodation for 300 persons. Mr. Duthie continued to do a useful work here, amidst many difficulties, until 1892, when he resigned. He is now resident in Manchester without charge. The cause has obtained generous help from the Union Funds since its commencement, and has found warm friends in the deacons and pastor of Grosvenor Street Church.

Congregationalism at Levenshulme is mainly indebted for its origin to a Mr. Holt, who, about 1864, was accustomed to hold meetings for worship in private houses. A new building, which served both for a Sunday School and a preaching place, was opened on June 27th of that year, J. Sidebottom, Esq., presiding. A church was formed in 1865, and in the early part of 1866 the Rev. J. Byles, a student from Lancashire College, accepted a call to the pastorate. After a ministry of about three

years he removed to Blackburn,¹ and was succeeded in 1870 by the Rev. Henry Young, who had been educated at Nottingham, and previously laboured at Painswick, in Gloucestershire. In 1872 he removed to Newport, Salop, being followed in December of that year by the Rev. R. D. Hutchison. He was educated at the Edinburgh Theological Hall, and previously had laboured at Cambuslang. After a brief pastorate at Levenshulme he resigned, and in 1874 served the St. Paul's Congregational Church at Wigan for a few weeks.² The present minister, the Rev. Wm. Reid, from Nelson,³ who was educated at Glasgow University, under Professors Ramsay, Buchanan, Taylor, and Fleming, entered upon duty here in September, 1875. In October, 1881, the present commodious house of worship was opened by Dr. Hannay. It is capable of seating about 500 people, and cost over £4,000, towards which the Chapel Building Society voted £500. A considerable debt was left upon the building, which seriously crippled the church for a few years; but the "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" for 1887 says:—

This church is now not only out of debt, but independent of the monetary aid of the Union, a result largely due to the labours of the pastor, the Rev. William Reid, who has now brought two churches, those of Nelson and Levenshulme, from infancy to maturity.

Heaton Moor, five miles from Manchester and one and a half from Stockport, has had a Congregational interest about twenty years. It originated in the desire of several Congregationalists who had come to reside in the neighbourhood to have a church after their own order. A school chapel, capable of holding 200 people, was erected, and the opening services were conducted by Dr. Macfadyen. In the summer of 1873 a church was formed, the number of members being about twenty. The first minister was the Rev. F. Sidney Morris. He is the son of the Rev. A. J. Morris, formerly Congregational minister at Warrington, was educated at Cheshunt College, and settled at Heaton Moor in January, 1876. The present iron chapel, with sitting accommo-

¹ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. ii.

² Ibid, vol. iv.

³ Ibid, vol. ii.

dition for 500 people, was opened at this time, its cost being about £1,400. Mr. Morris resigned in June, 1879, and is now the minister of a Unitarian congregation at York. His successor at Heaton Moor was the Rev. Colin Brewster. Born at Norwich, and brought up in the communion of the United Methodist Free Church, he exercised his gifts for some time in the ministry of that denomination. During his residence in Manchester as a circuit minister he attended classes at Owens College, and, seeing in Congregationalism greater attractions than he found in his own form of church government, he accepted the invitation of the Brownlow Hill Congregational Church, Liverpool. After labouring there about eight years he removed, in 1880, to Heaton Moor. After a long illness, during which his church showed him every kindness, he died at Cairo, whither he had gone to regain strength, on Good Friday, April 4th, 1890, aged fifty-four years. His remains were laid in the American cemetery there. The present minister is the Rev. P. K. Batchan, M.A. He was educated at Airedale College, had previously laboured some five years at Leyburn, in Yorkshire, and entered upon duty as successor to Mr. Brewster, November 1st, 1891. The chapel is within three minutes' walk of Heaton Chapel station, and occupies a splendid site fronting Heaton Moor Road. This year steps are being taken towards the erection of a more substantial and commodious structure. The church, "though Congregational in name and foundation," is described as "practically a Union Church, Presbyterians (Scotch families) being especially represented."

About two miles west of Heaton Moor is Burnage, a long, scattered village between Manchester and Stockport. It had no place of worship until 1859, when Mr. Samuel Watts, sen., lent a small house for a Sunday School, which was opened by members of his family, assisted by Mr. Frank Atterbury. In a short time the house became too small, and the back room was enlarged by Mr. Watts. The first address was given by Mr. Newbery a friend of the family, and for many years "buyer" in the firm of S. and J. Watts and Company.

Week evening meetings were commenced in 1860, being conducted by Mr. Newbery and other gentlemen, and in 1862 he held the first Sunday service. From this time until his

death, a period of nearly 30 years, he generally preached twice on the Sunday, superintended the school, taught a class, and conducted a week evening service, all for the love of the work and the benefit of the people. A church was formed in 1868, and in 1869 the chapel was built, with sitting accommodation for 200. The foundation stone was laid by Sir James Watts, and the funds were mainly provided by Mr. Samuel Watts, jun., and members of the family, who have continued their interest in the place to the third generation. Mr. Newbery suggested that a paid minister should be engaged, but his work was so successful, and he was so ready to serve, that no change was then made. He was an earnest preacher and a devoted minister. The congregation have placed a tablet to his memory in the little chapel which was so much his own. His loss has been deeply felt, and no one has yet been found to fill his place.¹

Heaton Mersey, some half a dozen miles south of Manchester, and near the Cheshire border, has been the home, more or less, of Congregational effort for over eighty years. About the year 1810, the Rev. William Evans, of Stockport, "first preached at Heaton Mersey at the request of some members of his congregation who resided here. These visits were only occasionally made."² The Rev. Solomon Ashton, also of Stockport, joined Mr. Evans in this work about 1812, and a service was held once a month in the village. In 1817 Heaton Mersey became an out-station of the Cheshire County Union, and from that time until 1826 the Rev. John Hart, the minister of Gatley, "assisted at times by laymen from Stockport, conducted the services." Two other Stockport ministers are also mentioned as rendering occasional help, viz., the Revs. G. F. Ryan and N. K. Pugsley. "During the greater part of this time," says Mr. Hooper, "the worshippers assembled in the open air, or in a small cottage." The growth of the interest led the

¹ Miss J. Watts, of Burnage, has kindly supplied me with particulars about this interesting cause. She is the daughter of Mr. Samuel Watts, senior, sister of Mr. Samuel Watts, junior, and niece of Sir James Watts.

² "Manual of the Heaton Mersey Congregational Church," 1892. For the historic account of the church which it contains, "being for the most part a copy of documents collected by Lady Watts, Abney Hall, Cheadle," I am indebted for much of the information here given.

friends to pass the following resolution on April 17th, 1825, at a special meeting convened for the purpose :—

That it is expedient that a more convenient place for Divine worship be provided; that the Rev. John Hart and Mr. John Shawcross respectfully solicit the aid of other ministers, and the opulent members of their churches and congregations, and also that the following persons be appointed a committee to receive contributions in the neighbourhood, from a halfpenny and upwards: Rev. John Hart, Messrs. John Shawcross, Nimrod Holden, George Smith, William Butler, Robert Ward, Seneca Wells, John Wells, Joseph Wilbraham, Thomas Carr, George Riley.

Shortly after this a church was formed consisting of fifteen members. The effort in the direction of a larger place of worship resulted in the cottage of Rebecca Sykes, where services had previously been held, being converted into a chapel. The three rooms, which were on one floor, were thrown together, and in its enlarged form it was opened for worship in 1827, the preachers being the Revs. G. F. Ryan and N. K. Pugsley. Previous to this, the Rev. John Hart, of Gatley, who had been greatly interested in the movement, had resigned his charge, and the young church applied to Mr. Jonathan Lees, of Manchester, to come over and preach, and also assist in obtaining supplies. He and Mr. Day¹ “sent supplies from time to time at their own risk.” In 1827 Heaton Mersey became associated with the Lancashire County Union, and obtained a grant of £20 from its funds. The Union Report, ending April, 1828, after stating that the building was sometimes crowded to “excess, when probably as many as 180 might be present,” says :—

There is no Sunday School in connection with the Independent interest there, in consequence of a large school having been for some time established on the spot, in which 500 children are taught, and in which several of the members of the church at Heaton Mersey are teachers, and one a visitor.

In August, 1836, the church unanimously resolved: “That it is desirable to erect a church for the worship of God, according to the manner of the Independents.” The committee of management

¹ In 1833, “the acceptable services” of Mr. Mills are referred to, who, for a time, preached there every Sabbath and once in the course of the week.

included two persons—Mr. John Jackson and Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Watts, who took the matter up in earnest. Accordingly, the foundation stone was laid on August 28th, 1839, by Mr. J. S. Jackson, of West Bank, and amongst those who assisted on the occasion were the Revs. J. Waddington, W. McKerrow, E. H. Nolan, M. Grindrod, and Mr. J. Hewitt. About 1,500 people were present at the ceremony. The new building was opened for worship on Wednesday evening, August 6th, 1840, by the Rev. Robert Halley, D.D., of Manchester, and on the following Sunday the preachers were the Revs. J. Hargreaves, Richard Fletcher, and Wm. McKerrow. At the beginning of 1842 a Sunday School was opened, “the children having been collected almost exclusively from amongst those who were not connected with any other school, and this principally by the personal exertions of a devoted member of the church at Grosvenor Street, Manchester, who up to the present time [written about April, 1842] comes regularly to teach a class of young men.”² It is a singular fact that during all these years the church had no stated minister, but on January 1st, 1845, the Rev. Stephen Hooper began his labours as such. He is one of very few survivors who were transferred from the Blackburn Academy, in 1843, to the Lancashire Independent College at Manchester, and, like his fellow student, the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, two years his senior in the ministry, has refused to exchange his first pastorate for any other. Mr. Davies excepted, Mr. Hooper is by many years the oldest Lancashire minister still in charge, and the church at Heaton Mersey is largely his own making. The following sentences indicate the improvements in the building since its erection, which has now accommodation for about 400 people :—

Since 1845 the chapel has been enlarged on two occasions. In 1855 the building was widened, the present pillars were introduced, and the north-east window put in. In 1864 the building was extended, and the gallery over the entrance erected. In 1870 the organ was presented by Sir James Watts, of Abney Hall, and about the same time the screen and pulpit were presented by Mr. Watts, of the Old Hall, Cheadle.²

¹ “Lancashire County Union Report,” ending April, 1842.

² “Church Manual.”

It ought to be mentioned that the name of Sir James Watts is closely associated not merely with Heaton Mersey, but with many of our Lancashire Churches, through his generous benefactions, and that Lady Watts and several of the family are still members of the Heaton Mersey Church, in whose welfare they are deeply interested.

The Withington Congregational Church, some four miles south of Manchester, though little more than a dozen years old, has grown to considerable strength, and abundantly demonstrated the wisdom of the movement. In February, 1880, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Melland, to consider how the religious needs of the neighbourhood might be met, there being present the Revs. Dr. Macfadyen, Dr. Hodgson, T. Willis, and Messrs. Melland, Clowes, Dimelow, and Swarbrick. At a larger meeting, held on November 5th of that year, in the Withington Primitive Methodist Chapel, a building committee was formed. Services were commenced in the Town Hall, on October 2nd, 1881, and on February 13th, 1882, a church was formed in the Board Room of the Town Hall, consisting of thirty-four members, the Revs. Dr. Macfadyen, Dr. Finlayson, and Dr. Hodgson assisting in the service. On the 8th of July following Mr. W. E. Melland laid the foundation stone of the present handsome and commodious structure, which will seat upwards of 800 people, and on June 7th, 1883, Dr. Macfadyen preached at its opening for public worship. The cost of the church was £7,200, and the school £2,800, towards which sums the Chapel Building Society voted £1,000. The Rev. James Williamson, M.A., became the first pastor of the new church, entering upon duty December 2nd, 1883. He was born in Banff, graduated in the Aberdeen University, and subsequently entered Lancashire College for the theological course. His first charge was Stalybridge, whence he removed to Gallowtree Gate, Leicester, and thence to Withington. During the last two years of his life he suffered much from a tumour, which eventually proved fatal on Tuesday evening, August 23rd, 1887. "At the age of forty-two he passed away in his easy chair, without a moment's warning and without a sign."¹ His successor was the

¹ "Congregational Year Book," for 1888, p. 213.

Rev. T. K. Higgs, M.A. He had been trained at Lancashire College, and for about ten years had laboured at Hanley, Staffordshire. Mr. Higgs resigned on the 8th of June, 1890, and is now pastor of the Greenacres Congregational Church, Oldham. The present minister is the Rev. C. H. Hickling, who was trained at Hackney, and whose previous spheres of labour were Hoddesdon, Herts, and Eastbourne. He commenced his ministry at Withington, May 31st, 1891. The school buildings were completed in 1891, the opening service being conducted by the Rev. James McDougall, on Sunday, April 26th.

Chorlton-cum-Hardy is another of these flourishing suburban churches in the south of Manchester which have grown up within recent years. In May, 1879, the attention of the deacons of the Stretford Congregational Church was called to the importance of holding services here, and the large room of the Masonic Hall was rented for £25 a year for Sunday evening services. Dr. Macfadyen hearing of the movement asked that his church might have a share in the work, and a joint committee was formed, with Mr. J. C. Needham as treasurer, representing the Chorlton Road Church, and Mr. P. C. Ford as secretary, representing the Stretford Church. The opening services were held on September 28th, 1879, when Dr. Macfadyen preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. G. C. Empson, pastor of the Stretford Church, preached in the evening. Morning services were commenced in the spring of 1881, and a Sunday School was established about the same time. The Rev. G. L. Turner, M.A., one of the Lancashire College Professors, gave very substantial help to the church by taking the services himself, or exchanging with leading ministers in the district. On June 25th, 1881, the Stretford Church suggested to the church at Chorlton Road that it should assume the entire responsibility of the Chorlton-cum-Hardy movement, which it did, Dr. Macfadyen frequently presiding at the monthly meetings of the committee, and at the communion services. On April 14th, 1883, Mr. Needham laid the memorial stone of a school chapel, "of plain Gothic character," capable of accommodating about 350 people. It was opened for worship on the 29th of September following, the preachers being the Revs. J. G. Rogers, B.A., of London, and Dr. Macfadyen. The cost of the building was about £2,000,

towards which the Chorlton Road Church contributed a generous sum from the proceeds of its bazaar, held in 1888. A church was formed on Monday, December 3rd, 1883, when forty-seven members were enrolled, and on Sunday, June 14th, 1885, the Rev. Robert Mitchell, of St. John's Wood, London, and previously of Queen's Park, Manchester, began his labours as the first pastor. He was educated at Glasgow, and had formerly exercised his ministry for many years in connection with the Evangelical Union of Scotland. He closed his pastorate at Chorlton-cum-Hardy, December 2nd, 1888, and removed to the Eignbrook Congregational Church, Hereford. He is now the minister of the E. U. Church at Greenock. The death of Dr. Macfadyen, in 1889, led to the termination of the union with Chorlton Road, and the church is now quite independent. The present minister, the Rev. David Walters, trained at Brecon, and previously stationed at Mold, succeeded Mr. Mitchell, on Sunday, June 29th, 1890. In the following October a fund was inaugurated for the erection of a new place of worship to be called "The Macfadyen Memorial Church," the building of which will be shortly commenced.

Still south of Manchester, though considerably west of the two places just named, is Stretford, where Congregationalism has had a footing for over sixty years. The following interesting account of the origin of the cause here is from the pen of a recent writer:—

More than 65 years ago, or, to write with chronological precision, in 1825, three good and earnest-minded men went out to Stretford from Manchester to engage in mission work, and to endeavour to promote religious zeal and activity amongst the villagers. Their names were J. Bromley, W. Howe, and J. Walker. They were all members of the Established Church, and came from the now no longer extant church of St. Clement, Lever Street, Manchester. They sometimes preached in the open air, and it was a curious but edifying spectacle to witness the crowds of bulky, uncouth rustics who, attracted and impressed by the enthusiasm of the speakers, were wont to gather silently and respectfully around their stands, all their uncultured rudeness subdued by the solemnity of the proceedings, and all their coarser feelings merged into a broad sense of reverence. The missionaries, of course, were also favoured by the support of the better class of residents, some of whom were markedly diligent in their attendance, when a cottage

was taken in Moore Street for the purposes of public worship. This cottage may be said to have been the first home of Congregationalism in Stretford, although the movement was at that time entirely undenominational, the services being conducted on such wide and general lines as to permit conscientious participation of almost all sects. The mission prospered, and before long the cottage was not able to contain the congregation. A Mr. Pearson stepped in very opportunely at this juncture, and erected a larger building in Chester Road, whose peculiarity of design was that upon its vacation as a church it could almost immediately, and with scarcely any expenditure of money or labour, be converted into habitable cottages. That building still stands in all its primitive simplicity in close proximity to the present church, though few are aware of the interesting historical associations that cluster round its faded walls. Before very long the continued growth of the mission again began to make itself felt, but nearly seven years elapsed ere the acquisition of a third and still larger place of worship became of urgent and imperative necessity. It was now determined that the new centre of the mission should be of a more appropriate style of construction and of more pretentious design, this commendably ambitious resolve being induced by the great, uninterrupted, and still increasing success of the movement. Accordingly, the first Congregational chapel and schools were erected, the site employed being that now occupied by the present edifice.

The Rev. Edward Morris was appointed the first pastor, concerning whom it is said that whilst he was "engaged in a course of private study in Manchester, J. Guinness Rogers, Absalom Clark, John Rawlinson, and other students of the Lancashire Independent College were endeavouring to plant Congregational churches at Stretford and Sale."¹ On Wednesday, September 9th, 1840, he was ordained to the pastorate here, the charge to the minister being given by the Rev. J. Gwyther. In that year the Lancashire County Union voted the sum of £50 to aid the station, and the first report which it presented to the Annual Meeting of the Union, in April, 1841, stated that there was preaching three times every Sabbath Day, with a "best attendance" of 120 people; that five persons had been added to the infant church, making the membership into twenty-one; that there was a Sunday School, with the names of 140 on the books; and that Mr. Morris had preaching stations at Urmston, Lostock, and Lostock Lane. Shortly after

¹ "Congregational Year Book" for 1890, p. 168.

this Mr. Morris undertook to revive the cause at Sale, concerning which it was thus reported at the time :—

The place had been closed, the church dissolved, the chapel was filthy and out of repair, the deeds unsatisfactory and even insecure; and worse than all, the interest had attached to it an ill odour in the neighbourhood.¹

Generously assisted by students of Lancashire College, Mr. Morris continued to work the two churches until 1849, when he resigned his connection with Stretford, and gave his undivided energies to Sale. Here he laboured until 1883, when advanced age brought about his retirement from a church which had grown under his care into one of the most vigorous in the county of Cheshire. He died on the 4th of July, 1889. His successor in the pastorate at Stretford was the Rev. John Simson. He was educated at the Blackburn Academy, being sent thither by the Great George Street Church, Liverpool, then under the pastoral care of Dr. Raffles. His first church was at Nantwich, whence he removed to Stretford in 1851. In 1858 "the friends of Christ at this place having met together and devised liberal things for the support of their minister," were able both to increase his stipend and dispense with further aid from the funds of the Union. Three years after this the present building, capable of seating about 550 people, replaced its "antiquated predecessor." The foundation stone was laid by John Rylands, Esq., on April 4th, 1861, "in the presence of a large assembly," and in addition to the pastor the Revs. Dr. McKerrow and David Horne assisted in the service. The cost of the new building was about £2,200. During Mr. Simson's ministry a secession took place, which resulted in the formation of a Union Church in Edge Lane, of which the Rev. Fitzherbert Bugby was the first minister. Mr. Simson resigned in 1865, and subsequently laboured at Marple and Baguley, in Cheshire. He died October 19th, 1892, aged seventy-seven years. His wife was Jane Thompson, daughter of James Thompson, "a linen merchant in Nantwich, one of whose ancestors suffered death in the battle of Drumclog."² The Rev. J.

¹ "County Union Report," ending April, 1844.

² "Congregational Year Book" for 189, p. 243.



MARPLE.

McAuslane, from Cumnock, who had studied at the Glasgow Theological Academy under Drs. Wardlaw and Thomson, followed in 1866. In 1871 he removed to Garlieston, Wigtownshire, where he laboured until his death, June 11th, 1877. He was the author of a little volume entitled "Prayer, Pardon, Peace,"—a book for inquirers. His brother was the late Dr. Alex. McAuslane, of Finsbury Chapel, London. The Rev. G. C. Empson, who had received his ministerial training at Spring Hill College, and previously laboured at Bilston, followed in 1872. It was during Mr. Empson's pastorate that the Stretford Church first interested itself in Congregational Church extension at Chorlton-cum-Hardy and Urmston, he being ever anxious to enlist the sympathies of his people in aggressive Christian work. He resigned the pastorate in 1883, and is now labouring in Michigan, U.S.A. The Rev. J. W. Kiddle, who was also trained at Spring Hill College, and whose previous pastorates were at Coventry and Charlestown, Pendleton, succeeded Mr. Empson in 1884, and still pursues a useful ministry here. A brass plate in the western porch contains the following inscription:—

The foundation stone
of this Church
was laid on Good Friday, A.D. 1861, by
JOHN RYLANDS, ESQ.,
of Longford Hall.
The Church was restored
and this porch added by
MRS. RYLANDS,
A.D. 1890.

The generous benefactions of Mr. Rylands, not alone to the Stretford Church, but to our denominational institutions generally, have won for him a high place in our history, and Mrs. Rylands has already proved herself to be like-minded with her late husband, not least by her handsome gift of the Althorp Library to the city of Manchester.

It has been previously stated that the Rev. E. Morris was in the habit of preaching at Urmston, a few miles west of Stretford, in the early part of his ministry; but the present interest is a much later formation. In the year 1879 a number of friends, chiefly members of

Congregational churches in Manchester, who were living at Urmston, decided to meet for worship, and engaged for that purpose a small room called the High School, in Flixton Road. The committee who undertook the responsibility of working this movement was presided over by the Rev. G. C. Empson, the Stretford minister. The room being very small and inconvenient it was resolved to take steps towards the erection of a church, and a building committee was appointed, consisting of the following persons:— Messrs. Robert Dobson, R. B. Taylor, C. H. Wyatt, Ellis Pugh, William Griffiths, C. Cutting, Richard Seel, John Thomson, Edwin Porter, Josiah Rigby, W. Walker, and W. G. Porter. On September 20th, 1879, the foundation stone of the new building was laid by Mr. Henry Lee, of Manchester, and in May, 1880, the High School was vacated, and services were held in the schoolroom of the new building. The church was opened on June 10th following, when the Rev. J. A. Macfadyen, M.A., preached in the afternoon, and in the evening a meeting was held, presided over by Mr. Wm. Armitage, J.P., of Altrincham. On October 26th, 1880, the church was formed. The Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, presided on the occasion, and the Rev. T. Willis, of Manchester, gave an address on Congregational Church principles. Twenty-two friends, who were transferred from other churches, entered into fellowship, and then received twenty-one others who desired to be associated with them. The Lord's Supper was afterwards celebrated, at which service the Rev. J. Rawlinson, of Manchester, and the Rev. F. Carter, of Northwich, assisted. The Rev. A. O. Lochore, a student of Lancashire College, on April 20th, 1881, accepted the invitation of the church to become its first pastor. He succeeded in reducing the heavy debt, which had been a serious burden to the cause from its commencement, and in enabling it to dispense with the assistance of the Union Funds. In April, 1888, he removed to Newport, Isle of Wight, where he is still the minister. His successor, the Rev. Henry Shaw, educated at Cheshunt, and who had previously held charges at Hull and Gloucester, began his labours at Urmston on December 2nd, 1888. He is still the minister here, and amongst those who loyally support him in his work are Messrs. Robert Tonge, J. D. Williams, J. R. Groundwater, George Duke,

and T. Hand, deacons of the church. Mr. Shaw is a frequent contributor of historical articles to our denominational literature. The church is situated in Flixton Road, Urmston, and will seat some 250 people. It cost about £3,000.

At Cadishead, still farther west, and on the right bank of the Mersey, is a small Congregational interest, which was originated in March, 1875, by the Rev. H. Fielden, of Partington. Services were held in a small shed, originally meant for fustian cutting, and which was familiarly known as the Congregational "Cathedral." On Good Friday, 1883, a new school chapel, capable of seating 200 people, was opened, the cost of which was £641. The Rev. G. Brimacombe supplied the pulpit for a short time after this, and then the Rev. D. Clegg, formerly of Clitheroe,¹ took charge of the place along with Partington, on the Cheshire side of the Mersey. The present minister is the Rev. J. Crewe. A grant is annually made from the funds of the Union in support of the cause, and the Rev. John Yonge, of Warrington, with several members of the Warrington Church, has generously bestowed upon it much labour and thought. The arrangement with Partington has been discontinued, that church being under the care of the Bowdon Rural Mission, and Cadishead is now superintended by the Warrington Committee, and aided, as stated above, by the Lancashire Union.

With Cadishead the circle of Congregational interests around Manchester is completed. We have come again to the original starting point. These interests, however, do not at all exhaust the good work which has been done by the Lancashire Congregational Union in this part of the county and in counties adjoining. Early Reports tell of preaching stations at Lymm, Woodhouses, Warburton, Carrington, Partington, and Mill Bank, in Cheshire; and Irlam, Flixton, Rixon, and Bury Lane, in Lancashire, all under the care of the Rev. Benjamin Holmes, formerly of Park Chapel, Ramsbottom.²

Cheshire has benefited considerably by the unselfishness of its richer neighbour, for many of the churches which skirt it on the

¹ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. ii.

² Ibid, vol. iii.

Lancashire side have been recipients of generous grants from its Union Funds. It extended its operations even into Derbyshire at one period of its history, the Congregational Church at Buxton being for three or four years helped out of its funds to the extent of £20 a year. All along its history the Lancashire Congregational Union has illustrated the broad, liberal, and aggressive spirit of its founders, for of the thirty-two ministers who signified their approbation of the "plan of the Union" in the vestry of Mosley Street Chapel, Manchester, September 23rd, 1806, six belonged to Cheshire, one to Derbyshire, and one to Yorkshire.

CHAPTER II.

THE MANCHESTER CHURCHES.

I.—CROSS STREET CHAPEL.

MANCHESTER Nonconformity finds its true starting point in the person of the Rev. Henry Newcome, M.A. Warden Heyrick, Richard Hollinworth, William Bourne, and William Walker are interesting names, and did space permit, much might be said respecting them as auxiliary forces in the creation of this new form of religious activity in the life of the town; but the centre of interest lies with Henry Newcome. He was born on the 27th of November, 1627, at Caldecot, in Huntingdonshire, the fourth son of the Rev. Stephen and Rose Newcome, being connected through his mother with a Salford family named Williamson; and while yet a youth was deprived by death of "father and mother within so short an interval that both were buried in one coffin." To the generosity of his elder brothers he was largely indebted for his entrance into St. John's College, Cambridge, on May 10th, 1644, "in the very heat of the wars." In September, 1647, he settled at Congleton as schoolmaster, where his brother Robert had before been, in reference to which event he afterwards writes: "I have oft lamented my so early coming from the University."¹ The Candlemas after he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts, and about that time began to preach. Concerning his marriage on July 6th, 1648, to Elizabeth Mainwaring, daughter of Peter Mainwaring, of Smallwood, Cheshire, he piously remarks:

I was rash and inconsiderate in this change of condition, and sinned in that I took not that advice I should have took of my friends in it.²

¹ "Autobiography" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvi.), p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

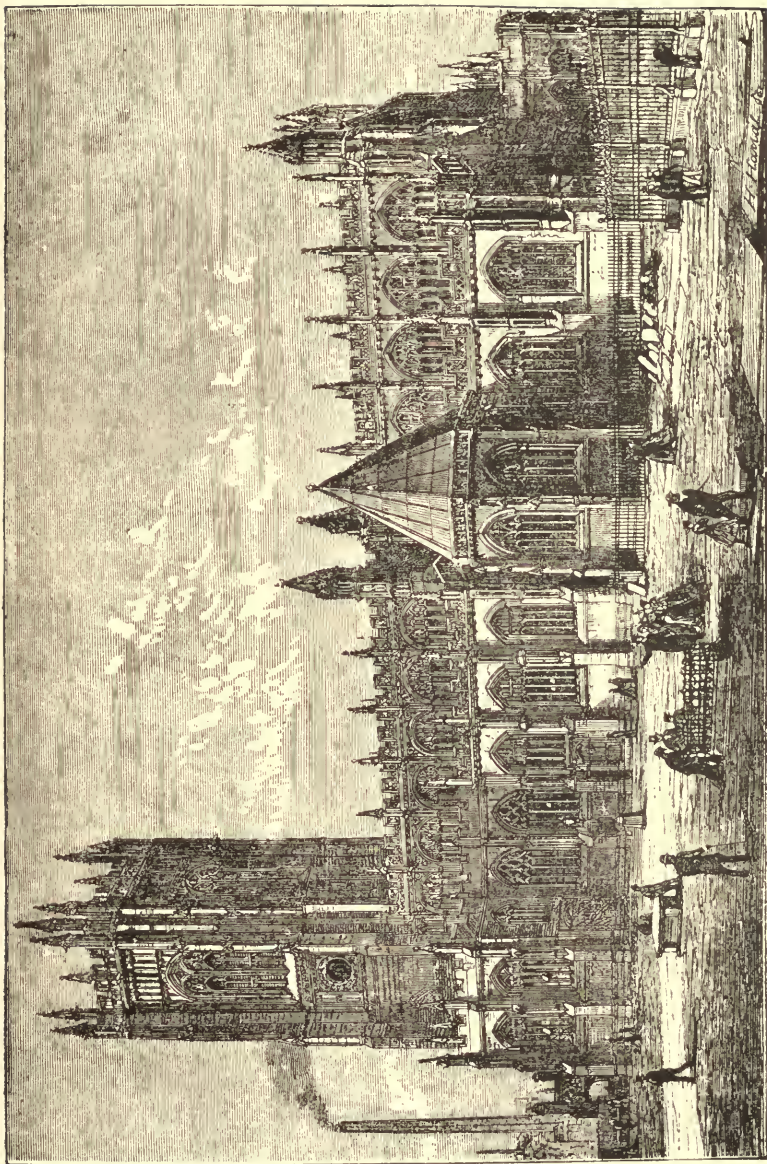
God, however, "very mercifully turned it into good," and the alliance with this important Cheshire family was of great service to him in after life. His ordination at Sandbach, on the 22nd of August following, was brought about, he tells us, "casually," through his asking Mr. Ley whether there was to be such a service. On being informed there would be, he says :

I thought of it, and so entered upon examination. God gave favour in their eyes, and, though young, they passed me, and I was solemnly set apart that day. Old Mr. Langley preached, and Mr. Ley managed the ordination.¹

After a brief ministry at Goosetree, he became rector of Gawsorth, near Macclesfield, in April, 1650, when he took his M.A. degree. The death of Mr. Hollinworth left a vacancy in the supply of the Manchester Collegiate Church pulpit, which Mr. Newcome was invited to occupy. After much hesitation, the invitation was accepted, and the following passage from his "Autobiography" will show how real his attachment was to his people at Gawsorth, whilst it illustrates the character of the man who was ever castigating himself for even his most minute failures :

On Thursday, April 16 [1657], the carts came and carried away all our goods towards Manchester. I was sadly affected, and broken all to pieces in leaving the house. I never was so broken in duty as I was in that which I went unto just when we were ready to go out of the house. We prayed the Lord that the sins of this seven years may be forgiven us, and that not one of them might follow us from that place ; that we might take a pardon with us, and leave the sins behind us ; and that God would bless us every child at going out. I thought I went like Jacob, my children before me, and I following after ; but I had no Esau to waylay me. I am afraid lest my way be perverse before the Lord. I am full of shame, and sorrow, and dejection. I could wish myself invisible till this transaction were overpast. But my Father knows my sorrow and my fears, and will, out of pity, speak to my comfort and be reconciled to me. I write this now, in April, 1666, when I am driven out nine years after upon the act, not only from one people to another, but from my people and family, and work, too, and must upon the matter go whither I may ; yet it is no such trouble to me as that was. There is a vast difference between going out on our own, and on God's account ; and when God supports, it is easier to be driven out than to go out when he

¹ "Autobiography" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvi.), p. 11.



THE CATHEDRAL, MANCHESTER.

in the least withdraws. We went with our family to Marten, to my cousin Davenport, who received us as if she had been my mother, and thence we were fetched by the horses and friends that came from Manchester.¹

Mr. Newcome's troubles in Manchester began early. On the return of Charles II., in 1660, the Fellowships in the Collegiate Church were restored, and Newcome was "left a minister without a people." His popularity, however, with the congregation, together with the fact that the Fellows had preferences elsewhere, left him and Warden Heyrick to supply the church much as before until August 31st, 1662, when he preached his last sermon therein. Beautiful is the picture of him which the following passage from his diary presents when coming the following Sunday and finding his place occupied by a surpliced preacher, he sat in the church as a sympathetic hearer, finding the service to be a "very sweet sacram^t."

Sabb: Sep. 7. I got up about 7. Read Mar. 5. Prepared as well as I could for the publicke. Wⁿ I came there I found Mr. Weston readinge in his surplis and hood. He preached on Lu. xii. 47. Mr. Browne consecrated in his surplis. I desired to apply myself to my God & I found it a very sweet sacram^t. Mr. Weston preached again in y^e afternoon. I catechized y^e children & we had a very sweet time of repetition. I was much helped in y^e duty.²

"When he could preach no longer," says Calamy, "he wrote many excellent papers upon practical subjects, and dispersed them among his hearers, who contributed liberally towards his support and showed great kindness to him and his family."³ The Five Mile Act sent Mr. Newcome out of Manchester, but he found an asylum in the house of Thomas Topping, at Ellenbrook, Worsley, until 1670. In this year he returned to Manchester, and two years later, taking advantage of the Indulgence Act, obtained licenses for himself as a Presbyterian preacher in his own house, and for his house as a Presbyterian meeting place. His license, however, he says, "would attain no end for its capacity," so he took a license on May 13th, 1672, for a barn "faire and spacious,"

¹ Page 71.

² "Diary" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xviii.), p. 120.

³ "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 368.

and the Lord's Day after he preached therein. Subjoined is a list of the other Manchester licenses taken out at this time :—

30th Apr., 1672,	HENRY FINCH, of Manchester, a general Presbyterian Teacher.
”	” A Private Oratory belonging to THOMAS BIRCH, Esq., of Birch Hall, in Lancashire. Congr. & Presby.
”	” The howse of ROBERT EATON, in Manchester, Presbyt.
”	” ROBERT EATON, Presbyt.
10th June,	” The howse of HENRY FINCH, in Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” The howse of WM. WILSON, in Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” WM. WILSON, Presbyt.
15th June,	” The howse of SAM. BURE, at Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” SAM. BURE, Presbyt.
25th July,	” The howse of JOHN LEEDS, at Manchester. Presbyt.
5th Sept.	” The howse of CALEB BROADHEAD, at Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” The howse of NICH. DEARNELLYES, in Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” The howse of RICH. HOLBROKE, in Manchester. Presbyt.
30th Sept.	” JOHN ANGIER, at his owne house at Manchester. Presbyt.
”	” SAMUL ANGIER, at the house of Jane Hide, of Hide holle [Hyde Hall] in Manchester. Presbyt.
18th Nov.,	” The howse of RICHARD HOLLAND, of Manchester. Presbyt.
3rd Feb., 1673.	The howse of Mr. BUXTON, in Manchester. Presbyt. ¹

The relief granted to the Nonconformists by this Indulgence Act was only very temporary, for in 1673 the Act was revoked, and all the licenses became void. Mr. Newcome writes under date April 26th, 1673, Sunday : “The justices took cause to stop my preaching in my own house.” It is not clear to what extent he had liberty to preach during the years immediately following, probably it was very limited, and on April 17th, 1676, he says, “We were now about removing the goods out of the chapel [barn] now our liberty there was utterly extinct.” The following passage epitomises the next eleven years which were among “the most trying of his ministry” :—

His friends had determined upon his staying in Manchester whether he had liberty of service or not, and a stated income was raised for him. He was ever among his people, advising, consoling, and preaching, and his house was open to any who desired communion with him. He was of a sensitive temperament. He was troubled, he tells us, at the scorn of the poor wife of

¹ Copied from a paper by the late Mr. Bailey in “Local Gleanings,” 1879-1880, p. 448.

the Warden ; he was troubled also at a flower that was gone from his garden ; but he tells us also that he was humbled at himself for being troubled at so little a thing. He and his friends were singled out for persecution ; their meetings were broken up by the civil officers, and heavy fines were imposed ; he was belied, and lived under daily apprehension of new difficulties.¹

The Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 once more brought liberty to the suffering Nonconformists. It was issued on April 4th, the news reached Manchester on the 7th, and on the 20th Mr. Newcome says :—

It being Wednesday, I began to preach in Mr. Barlow's house that is empty, with great satisfaction and rejoicing. I continued to preach on Wednesdays, and after evening sermons on the Lord's Day, a good while ; till the churchmen wearied the hearers by their unwearied reflections, and so I was forced into the public time.²

On the 12th of June he removed with his people to a larger building, concerning which under that date he writes :—

After much difficulty, having obtained Thomas Stockton's barn, I began to preach there to a great congregation, with much freedom and ease to myself. The enlarging of the place we had great trouble about, but came to some result about it July 15th, after much struggling and several sentences of death on the thing. A good work, we wrestle, as it were, with an unseen spirit to get it forward.³

Hitherto Mr. Newcome had preached at times so as not to interfere with the services in the Collegiate Church, which he himself continued to attend, but on July 31st, 1687, he says: "I began to preach in the public time." On the 7th of August following, the Rev. John Chorlton (of whom more subsequently) "came in, and began to preach in the forenoon, and performed well, and hath continued in the work to great satisfaction."⁴ The more peaceful times which followed the accession of William of Orange made the increasing, influential, and wealthy congregation which had hitherto worshipped in Stockton's barn think of a larger and more convenient building. Mr. Newcome was not enthusiastic

¹ "Memorials of a Dissenting Chapel," by Sir Thomas Baker, p. 11.

² "Autobiography," p. 264.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 265.

⁴ *Ibid.*

about the matter as he states in the following lengthy but deeply interesting passage :—

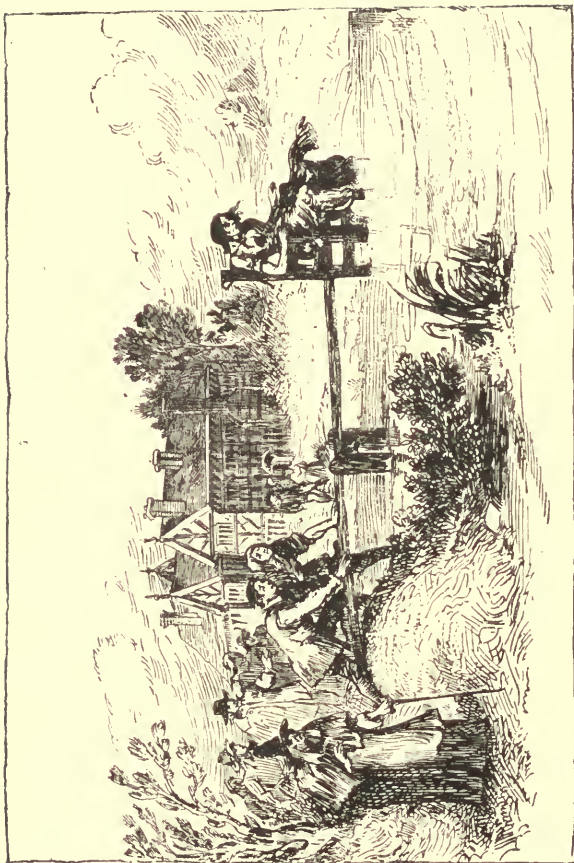
April 12th [1693]. About this time some were hot about a new meeting place. I did not well understand the likelihood of the thing, but prayed that God would by his good providence so order it that I may not bear the burden of hindering the whole work, nor yet be found to consent to what is inconvenient.

13th. The matter seemed to fall, and that upon other reasons, and not at all upon my dissatisfaction, which is a great mercy to me. But it revived again, and through many ups and downs it was at length concluded on. Yet just when it should have been set upon (July 6th), it was quite dashed, to my thinking, and yet within a day or two it strangely revived again. These uncertainties drive it far in the year. It was not begun till fully 18th, and many curses and reproaches the foundation was laid in. I did, I confess, not set my heart much upon it, but was rather passive a great while, upon thoughts (among other things) that I might not live to serve in it. But I confess I was more willing after, and did use my interests, while I had any, to promote it (wherein I had some success). (1) For that other place is too little—not room for the poor, who have souls; and some of better rank would come if they could have seats. Some this summer over-set with heat by the greatness of the crowd. I could wish (2) that the neglect at the great church, in the scandalous provision there, did not help the endeavour for more room. (3) The foolish scandal at the barn will hereby be removed. (4) It will, however, be more honourable for the worship of God. (5) Most places have led us the way in new decent erections of this kind. It hath gone on since it begun considerably, and hath prospered thus far, and the roof firmly laid on and covered by this time, and to the shame of all ill-willers and ill-wishers, no dangers of shrinking or falling. But that which I was greatly concerned for was the massiness of the roof, and unordinary danger, and I prayed earnestly that no one might receive bodily harm by the work; and that the Lord hath showed us mercy herein I desire to acknowledge with all thankfulness. August 27th: There was occasion in this business for this reflection; great oppositions, weak dissatisfactions, and malicious reflections against a public good work and them that engage in it.¹

“The agreement,” says Sir Thomas Baker, “for the purchase of the land on which the chapel was built bears date June 20th, 1693. The land itself is described as ‘part of a parcel of land commonly called Plungen’s Meadow.’”² This district was then

¹ “Autobiography,” p. 278.

² “Memorials of a Dissenting Chapel,” p. 14.



POOL HOUSE, WITH ITS DUCKING STOOL.

quite rural. Adjoining Plungeon's Meadow¹ was Pool Fold, with its ducking stool and the ancient Hall of the Radcliffe family. The lease and re-lease by which the land was conveyed bear date August 16th and 19th, 1693; and the building was opened for worship on June 24th, 1694, when Mr. Newcome preached from Ex. xxviii., 36. "The erection of a gallery," says Sir Thomas Baker, "was a private speculation of two members of the congregation (John Evans and Thomas Siddall). The agreement into which they entered for this purpose with the trustees of the chapel is dated 12th February, 1694. By it they were to repay themselves out of the money received for the seats in the intended gallery, which was to be erected at the north end of the chapel, and to be finished by the following October. They were to have a pew each at a rental of twenty-four shillings per annum, and to give to the trustees a full account of their expenditure and receipts."² The chapel was the largest Nonconformist place of worship in the county, having a congregation of 1,515, of whom seventy-four were county voters. Amongst generous contributors to the undertaking were Sir Edward Mosley, of Hulme Hall, with Dame Jane Meriel, his wife.³ Mr. Newcome did not survive the erection of the new building long. He preached his last sermon in it on June 13th, 1695, a year within a week after its opening, and died

¹ "Plungeon" (not Plungen), or "Plunging Field," was the site of the tumbrel, or cuckstool, and in the 17th century the designation "gave rise to the vulgar name of St. Plungeon's Chapel" for the "Presbyterian meeting house north of Tib Lane." (Reilly's "Early History of Manchester," p. 52.)

² "Memorials of a Dissenting Chapel," p. 15.

³ Mr. Newcome was on terms of close intimacy with the Mosley family, and his autobiography contains notices of frequent visits to Hulme Hall. Sir Edward Mosley at his death in 1695 left him a legacy of £20, and his wife, Dame Jane Meriel Mosley, gave £50 for the poor of the Cross Street congregation. Their daughter, Lady Ann, married Sir John Bland, who belonged to the "Church and King" party, and who broke the windows of the barn where Newcome was preaching. Shortly afterwards, however, Mr. Newcome was summoned to her residence at Ancoats to "a day of prayer" on "Lady Bland's account," who was lying sick. She continued for some time to attend the Nonconformist meeting-house, but later in life she went to St. Ann's Church, in St. Ann's Square, whose foundation stone she laid, and which was so called in honour of her and of Queen Anne, during whose reign it was erected.



HULME HALL, THE RESIDENCE OF THE MOSLEYS.

September 17th following, aged sixty-eight years. At his own request he was buried within the chapel to the right of the pulpit, where his tombstone may yet be seen, thus inscribed :—

Here Resteth the Body of
HENRY NEWCOME, A.M.,
Minister of the Gospel in Manchester 38 years,
Buried September 20th, 1695,
Aged 68 years.
JAMES NEWCOME,
Died 25th January, 1695, in the 9th (?) year of his age.
ELIZABETH,
Relict of Henry Newcome, &c.,
Died, aged 84,
And was buried February 8th, A.D. 1700.
ROSE
(their daughter),
Buried May 4th, 1719, in her 70th year.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. John Chorlton, from Daniel xii., 3. Concerning Mr. Newcome much has been written, the most, and the most important, by himself.¹ He had a wide circle of eminent friends to whom his death came as a heavy blow. Mr. Chorlton, his assistant, in the sermon previously named, which was eventually published, says :—

If I reckon our deceased reverend brother among the chiefest of those modern worthies that have turned many unto righteousness, and do now shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, I doubt not to have the suffrage of all who hear me and of all that new him.²

The learned John Howe says :—

There was in him a large stock of solid learning and knowledge always ready for use; for ostentation, never. Conscience, the most strict and steady to itself, and the remotest from censoriousness of other men. Eloquence, without any labour of his own, not imitable by the greatest labour of another.³

¹ His "Autobiography and Diary," forming vols. xviii., xxvi., xxvii. of the Chetham Society's publications, are invaluable to all writers on Nonconformity; whilst they are a revelation of the man himself. From them I have drawn largely in the preparation of this sketch.

² "Autobiography," p. 287.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

William Bagshaw, "the Apostle of the Peak," says:—

Very pleasant hast thou been to me. Thy love was wonderful, passing the love of women.¹

Similar high testimony to his character will be found in the writings of Oliver Heywood, Matthew Henry, and other equally noted men. To this brief outline of this good man's life, who was the father of Manchester Nonconformity, it only remains to be added that he left at death a few productions from his pen of a sermonic character, and that subsequent members of the Newcome family have risen to prominence in the ecclesiastical world.²

The death of Mr. Newcome left the Rev. John Chorlton in sole charge of the congregation. He was a native of Salford, being born there about 1666, and had been educated by the Rev. Richard Frankland, entering his academy at Rathmell, April 4th, 1682. As previously noted, he came to assist Mr. Newcome in August, 1687, by whom he was regarded with the deepest affection from the very first. On the 8th of March, 1689, he married Hannah, the daughter of Joseph Leech, who died November 3rd, 1704. Mr. Chorlton himself died a few months after this, on May 16th, 1705, being buried on the 19th, in the Collegiate Church, Manchester. The "Northowram Register" thus remarks upon the fact: "An unspeakable loss to that Town, & to the Church of God."³ Like his predecessor, he was an intimate friend of Matthew Henry, who was deeply grieved by his death, and who, in the following passage, gives his affections full play:—

Mr. Chorlton, of Manchester, my dear and worthy brother, after about a fortnight's illness of a diabetes, died on Wednesday, the 16th May, 1705. He was eminent for solid judgment, great thought, and an extraordinary quickness and readiness of expression; he was a casuist, one of a thousand; he had a wonderfully clear head, and was one who did *dominari in concionibus*; he was of great sincerity and serious piety; has been very useful in educating youth; he was in the 40th year of his age; survived his wife about half a

¹ "Autobiography," p. 293.

² In the Lancashire Independent College, Whalley Range, Manchester, is an excellent painting of the Rev. Henry Newcome, from which the engraving has been made which appears in vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Page 237.

year; and was my beloved friend and correspondent about sixteen years. Oh, Lord God, wilt thou make a full end? His funeral sermon was preached and published by Mr. James Coningham, his friend and fellow-labourer; and he has given him his just character. Mr. Chorlton and Mr. Scoles¹ were born in the same town; were bred up together from their childhood; were educated together, both in language and sciences; were very justly accounted two of the most considerable men for good sense and learning that the town of Manchester, or the parts adjacent, have produced.²

Two points in that passage need to be noticed. Mr. Chorlton, in addition to pastoral duties, conducted an academy in Manchester. This virtually took the place of the Rev. Richard Frankland's Academy, which, after his death, October 1, 1698, was broken up, and "the schollers dispersed." "Not long after," says Oliver Heywood, "Mr. John Chorlton set up a teaching University, learning in a great house in Manchester, Lanc."³ Hunter says that "the academy acquired what may be called a public character, by a resolution of the Lancashire ministers at one of their meetings, that they gave it their countenance, and meant to support it."⁴ It was continued some six or seven years after Mr. Chorlton's death. From Matthew Henry's statement, also, it appears that the Rev. James Coningham, M.A., was Mr. Chorlton's assistant.⁵ He was educated at Edinburgh University, and settled first at Penrith, about 1694. He removed to Manchester in 1700, to be the colleague of Mr. Chorlton, whose death left him in sole charge in 1705. "He deeply felt the loss he had sustained," says Sir Thomas Baker, "and difficulties arose with which his sensitive nature did not enable him sufficiently to contend. There were divisions among his people, great hostility to the Dissenters, and a prosecu-

¹ The Rev. Nathaniel Scholes, of Newton Heath, vide ante p. 41.

² "Memoirs of the Rev. M. Henry" (Williams), p. 261.

³ "Diaries," vol. ii., p. 16.

⁴ "Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 426.

⁵ Sir Thomas Baker ("Memorials," p. 18), says that Mr. Chorlton had an assistant named Gaskeld during the years 1697 and 1698. He remained in Manchester only about a year, then suddenly disappeared, but was heard of afterwards in Hull, whence he passed over to Holland. Oliver Heywood (*Yorkshire County Magazine* for January, 1893, p. 21, by J. Horsfall Turner) says in his diary: "Nov. 29, 1698. Tuesday—Letter from Manchester. Strange news of Mr. Chorlton's assistant running away."

tion was commenced against him for keeping an academy."¹ In 1712 he removed to Haberdashers' Hall, London, when, after a four years' ministry, "attended with great success," he was "seized with a mortal distemper, which carried him off on the 1st of September, 1716." His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Samuel Wright, from Rev. xiv., 13, and he was interred in Bunhill Fields, the following inscription being placed upon his tombstone :—

Here resteth
The Body of the late Rev.
MR. JAMES CONINGHAM, M. A.,
Minister of the Gospel,
Who died September 1, 1716,
In the 47th year of his age.
And Three Children,
Anne, died May 5, 1713, aged 15 years.
Sophia, died Aug. 23, 1713, aged 23 days.
Mary, died Jan. 7, 1713-4, aged 4 years.²

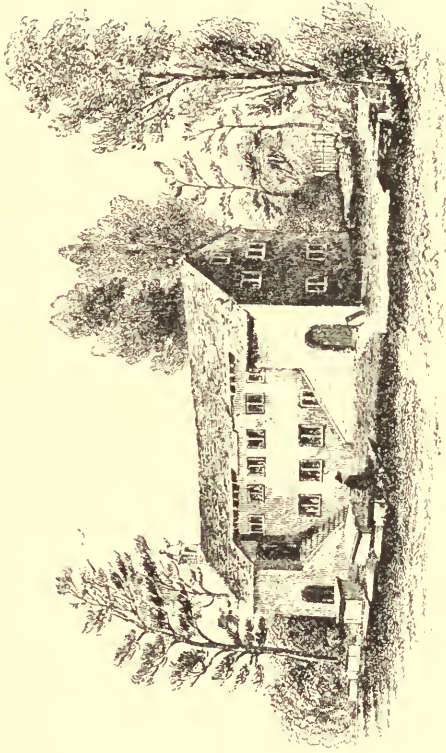
The Rev. Eliezer Birch was appointed to succeed Mr. Coningham. He was a native of Manchester, and related probably to the Birches of Birch Hall,³ and was educated by Mr. Frankland, whose academy he entered February 9th, 1675-6. He appears as the minister of Dean Row, in Cheshire, on September 15th, 1687, when he preached at Congleton the funeral sermon of the Rev. George Moxon, an ejected minister; but whether that was his first charge is not clear. After nearly twenty years' service there he was invited to Yarmouth, in Norfolk.⁴ The following passage

¹ "Memorials," p. 19.

² "Dissenting Churches," by Walter Wilson, vol. iii, p. 137.

³ In the "History of Birch Chapel" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xlvii.) are two or three references to a Mr. Eliezer Birch. He was one of the witnesses to the will dated June 24th, 1692, of the Rev. Robert Birch, of Birch Chapel, ejected in 1662; and to him, along with others, Ralph Worsley, in 1706, converged the Dissenting Chapel there. A "Mr. Birch, minister," probably the same person, appears amongst the list of contributors towards the erection of that chapel in 1700.

⁴ Previous to his removal to Yarmouth Mr. Birch, who had only been ordained by his people, sought ministerial ordination, as appears from the following passage in Matthew Henry's Diary:—"Mr. Birch, who was ordained by the *people*, and had been their pastor about twenty years, at his



DEAN ROW CHAPEL, ERECTED ABOUT 1688.

testifies to the fine spirit in which ministerial changes were made two centuries ago, and is a witness to the high regard in which Mr. Birch was held by his people at Dean Row.

On the 24th June, 1706, they [the people of Yarmouth] sent a letter to him, inviting him "for the sole pastoral office if he thought good to come to us." Mr. Birch's church sent "a pure denial to us about their reverend pastor; they, finding what we had done to be to their great sorrow, did most Christian like desire us to forbear any further procedure in this matter." This church replied to the letter "with all tenderness, love, and charity, endeavouring by all possible arguments to prevail with them to give up their reverend pastor to us here." Private information was given to the church at Yarmouth that Mr. Birch was willing to give them a meeting; he came and preached, and as the result, on September 12th the church "renewed the call to Mr. Birch to the pastoral office." They handsomely defrayed the expenses of himself and a companion who came with him, and gave them a present besides. After he had left the town "to our great joy he resolved to come; and a house was provided for him near the chapel." They waited for him six months, and on the 30th April, 1707, they "sent from Yarmouth a coach and six horses for Nottingham, to meet Mr. Birch and family, who arrived here May 8th, in good health. Thanks be to God.¹

About two years after this the Rev. Daniel Smith was appointed assistant to Mr. Birch. The two ministers did not get on together, and, in the end, both resigned,² Mr. Birch returning to Lancashire

removal, being not satisfied with the want of ministerial ordination, procured three or four ministers privately to ordain him, with the imposition of hands. The moderate of that congregation [Dean Row] are contriving to gain that point from the other party." ("Memoirs of the Rev. M. Henry," Williams, p. 148.) Early ordination services were very different from those of to-day. In some churches the people were the ordainers, neighbouring ministers being only spectators; in others several candidates were ordained together by some of the eminent ministers of the county in some particular place. "It was only by degrees," says Mr. Williams, "that ordinations among Nonconformists came to be performed, as now they almost invariably are in the presence of the congregation for whom the oversight is taken." (Ibid, p. 149).

¹ "History of Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk" (Browne), p. 242.

² A writer in the *Christian Reformer* for 1845 (p. 378), says that the cause of the quarrel between the two ministers was probably "a difference in religious opinions, which at that time began to be much agitated in Presbyterian congregations." There is no authority for this. It is much

in August, 1710, and Mr. Smith in September following dying of "a broken heart in his homeward journey." In 1712 Mr. Birch became the pastor of the Cross Street congregation in succession to Mr. Coningham. It was in his day that Cross Street Chapel was wrecked by the Sacheverel mobs, every seat being pulled out, and the internal fittings destroyed. The captain of the Manchester rioters was Tom Syddall, a blacksmith (by some called a barber), who, along with several of his followers, was sentenced to imprisonment and the pillory at Lancaster, and subsequently executed for participation in the Rebellion of 1745. Parliament awarded £1,500 as compensation for the damage done to Cross Street Chapel. Mr. Birch survived these events only a short time, dying May 12th, 1717. He was buried under the chapel vestry. The "Northowram Register" contains the following:—

Mr. Eliezir Birch, minr. at Manchester New Chappel, died May 12, bur. May 15. A man of Eminent Ministerial Abilities: The loss is very great. Cease Lord! Help Lord!"¹

The Rev. Joseph Mottershead followed. He was born on August 17, 1688, in the neighbourhood of Stockport, his father having a small estate there, which he inherited. He was educated for the ministry by the Rev. Timothy Jollie, of Attercliffe, Sheffield, and afterwards spent a year with the Rev. Matthew Henry, of Chester, forming a friendship then which was only interrupted by death. Whilst a candidate for the ministry he preached at Kingsley, in Cheshire, from 1710 to 1712. He was ordained at Knutsford on August 5th of that year, when the Rev. Gamaliel Jones, of Hatherlow, was the principal person engaged, "who gave y^e exhortation from Hebrews xiii., 20."² Mr. Mottershead was "well

more likely that it is simply an illustration of the difficulty of the copastorate. Nor do I think the writer is correct in saying that both ministers were "dismissed." Mr. Birch intimated that either Mr. Smith or himself must go, and, though it is true that the church was "forced to deny his request, endeavouring to make him sensible of our danger of separation," yet it endeavoured "to persuade him to stay with us in love." And when his decision to remove was made known, the church resolved that Mr. Smith also must go.

¹ Page 271.

² Urwick's "Nonconformity in Cheshire," p. 321.

settled" at Nantwich on August 10th, 1713, when Matthew Henry preached there on Josh. i., 5, 6. It is an interesting fact that the noted commentator died the following year, Tuesday, June 22nd, at Mr. Mottershead's house, where he had called whilst on his way from Chester to London. In 1718 Mr. Mottershead succeeded Mr. Birch at Manchester, having sole charge¹ of the congregation until 1739, when he received the Rev. John Seddon, M.A., as colleague. He was the son of the Rev. Peter Seddon, of Cockey Moor,² born at Lomax Fold, near Bolton, and educated by Dr. Rotheram at Kendal, subsequently taking his M.A. degree at Glasgow University. At the time of his appointment as Mr. Mottershead's colleague he was not more than twenty-three years of age, and his ordination was delayed until October 22nd, 1742. The ordaining ministers were the Revs. John Chorley, Monton; John Whitaker, Platt Chapel; Joshua Dobson, Cockey Moor; Henry (?) Knight, Cross Street, in Cheshire; and Joseph Mottershead. Mr. Seddon married the eldest daughter of Mr. Mottershead, and so became joined to him by family as well as ministerial ties. He held views far in advance of the time on the question of the Trinity. Dr. Joseph Priestley, when tutor of the Warrington Academy, says: "The only Socinian in the neighbourhood was Mr. Seddon, of Manchester; and we all wondered at him."³ These views "he boldly advanced and defended" in his "public services at a time when they were very obnoxious to his hearers." His biographer says:—

From this practice he was requested in vain to desist, and, at length, a deputation from the society desired Mr. Mottershead to remonstrate with his son-in-law upon his conduct. Mr. Mottershead undertook the commission,

¹ I have in this followed the histories of Sir Thomas Baker and Mr. Wade, but Dr. Halley mentions the Rev. Joshua Jones, who preached a sermon at Cross Street in 1719, on the anniversary of the defeat of the rebels at Preston, as sometime assistant to Mr. Mottershead. Dr. Evans, in his list of Presbyterian Chapels and Charities, also fixes him here in 1725. This was the person of that name, I imagine, who had been previously at Oswestry. The "Northowram Register" (p. 329) contains the following:—"Mr. Joshua Jones, Minr. in Manchester, died at Chester, Aug. 25 [1740]."

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ "Memoirs of Dr. Priestley," by his son, Joseph Priestley, p. 48.

and opened the business to Mr. Seddon, when the latter replied that he would enter with him upon the discussion of the subjects in question most willingly, and when convinced of his error he would be forward to acknowledge it, and read his recantation. A day was fixed for the discussion, and they met and entered upon it in the spirit of perfect peace and cordiality with each other, and the whole day was consumed in debate. At the close of it Mr. Mottershead withdrew and reported to the society that he had not succeeded in convincing his son-in-law of his error, but that his son-in-law had almost convinced him that he was right; an instance of great candour and liberality at a very advanced age.¹

This passage is given in full to show that there is more justification than Sir Thomas Baker seems willing to admit for the contention of both Dr. Halley and the editors of "The Socinian Controversy" that Mr. Seddon's views led to an important secession from the Cross Street congregation. Sir Thomas Baker says that "the opinions of the congregation generally were in unison with those of the ministers, for Unitarianism was general in the society." The testimony of Dr. Toulmin, however, who wrote the above passage in 1808, is that Mr. Seddon's views were "very obnoxious to his hearers," and it is clear that these "hearers" were an important body. So much so that Mr. Mottershead undertook to remonstrate with his son-in-law at their request. Nor do I think there was the sympathy with Mr. Seddon's views on the part of Mr. Mottershead, which Sir Thomas Baker suggests. The statement that his son-in-law had "almost convinced him that he was right" is not so much a declaration of his theological position as an effort on the part of a "quiet and peaceable man," seventy years old or more, to prevent dissension in his congregation. Job Orton, who was always lamenting the Socinian tendencies of his day, says:—

I wish they [the Manchester congregation] may find a successor to good Mr. Mottershead equal to him, and who will support his character and reputation, and that of the ministry so well as he hath done. He hath been honoured with an uncommon length of life, vigour, and usefulness.²

Mr. Seddon died on November 22nd, 1769, and was buried in the chapel near to Mr. Birch; Mr. Mottershead followed Novem-

¹ "Memoirs of the Rev. S. Bourn," by Toulmin, p. 253.

² "Practical Works," vol. ii., p. 553.

ber 4th, 1771, "having been minister of the congregation at Manchester nearly fifty-four years, and was interred in the chapel in a spot adjoining that occupied by the ashes of Mr. Newcome." The inscription upon his tombstone has become undecipherable in one or two places. The following is a copy:—

Hic Sepultae Su . . .
 quiae MARGRET Uxoris
 Secundae JOSEPHI MOTTER
 SHEAD, V.D.M. : ob^t Jan^y 31 1739
 nec non ABIGAIL Uxoris
 tertiae ob^t Decem^r 28 1753
 Utraeq fuerunt gratiosae (?)
 The Rev^d. Mr. JOSEPH MOTTERS
 HEAD dy'd Nov^r. 4 1771
 Aged 83
 SARAH BLACKMORE
 died October 27th 1792
 Aged 81 years
 The Rev^d. GABR^L. NICHOLS
 died March 23rd 1778
 Aged . . . years

Mr. Mottershead was married three times. First to Miss Bennett, of Hapsford, near Chester, by whom he had several children, one of whom, intended for the medical profession, whilst pursuing his studies at Edinburgh for that purpose, changed his mind and took orders in the Church of England. Subsequently he was appointed chaplain on board a man-of-war, "which is supposed to have been lost, for neither the vessel nor the crew were ever heard of." One daughter married Mr. Seddon, and another John Jones, the founder of the well-known banking firm of Jones and Loyd. Mr. Mottershead's second wife was the widow of Nathaniel Gaskell,¹ one of whose daughters by a former wife became the mother of the celebrated Lord Clive, founder of the British Empire in India. "The future hero," says Sir Thomas Baker, "spent his childhood and youth in Manchester," and his early education was received at

¹ In the "Northowram Register" (p. 215) is the following:—"Mr. John Mottershead and Mrs. Margaret Gaskell, of Manchester, mar This is her 3d husband and his 2d wife [about Dec. 27, 1720]." This, I imagine, was the Rev. Joseph Mottershead, his name being wrongly given as John.

Stand Grammar School. In June, 1742, Mr. Mottershead married as his third wife the daughter of the Rev. Chewing Blackmore, dissenting minister at Worcester. As an instance of the respect in which he was held by the congregation and the Manchester people generally, it is recorded that at the time of the 1745 rebellion "a committee, which consisted of many very respectable inhabitants, was formed in the town of Manchester to favour the Pretender, and they resolved to levy a large sum of money for him, and Mr. Mottershead was selected by them as a hostage, under the persuasion that his congregation would pay a great price for his ransom."¹ Information of the plot was, however, given to Mr. Mottershead, who consequently managed to escape, but Mr. James Bayley was seized and had to pay £2,500. Job Orton also tells the following story about him :—

I remember Mr. Mottershead once said to a pert young divine, who smiled at his putting on a band to preach a country lecture: "Any little thing which will set off a sermon and recommend it to the regard of the hearers, becomes a very important thing."²

Both Mr. Seddon and Mr. Mottershead left one or two volumes of sermons.

The Rev. Robert Gore succeeded Mr. Seddon in 1770, and the Rev. Ralph Harrison took the place of Mr. Mottershead in 1771. Mr. Gore was a native of Liverpool, and educated at the Warrington Academy. His ordination took place on August 23rd, 1779, when the Revs. Dr. Wm. Enfield, Richard Godwin, and Philip Holland conducted the service. He survived this service only one month dying on September 23rd, at the early age of thirty-one years, and was buried in the vestibule of the Cross Street Chapel. His biographer relates the following incident in connection with him :—

Once when he ascended to the upper desk of the pulpit he was observed to search his coat pocket uneasily. Not finding there what he wanted, he gave out a long hymn, came down from the pulpit, and quietly left the chapel. Manchester was but small then, and his home was not far off; he

¹ "Memoirs of the Rev. S. Bourn," by Toulmin, p. 255.

² "Practical Works," vol. ii., p. 565.

found his sermon, and managed to gain the pulpit as the congregation was singing the last of the many verses. He took as a text the words: "Be careful for nothing."¹

His colleague, the Rev. Ralph Harrison, was the son of the Rev. Wm. Harrison, minister of Stand Chapel in 1730, and great grandson of the Rev. Cuthbert Harrison, an ejected minister, who was for many years at Elswick, near Kirkham. His grandmother was Ann Angier, daughter of the Rev. Samuel Angier, of Dukinfield, whose husband was the Rev. John Cooper, dissenting minister for some years at Hyde. Mr. Ralph Harrison has left in MS. some interesting particulars of his life up to the time of his settlement in Manchester, from which the following is extracted:—

Born Aug. 30, 1748 O.S. or Sep. 10 N.S. Went to school for a little while when merely an infant to Catherine Garlick, a schoolmistress, then to Mr. Moorwood, both of Buxton, Dec. 19, 1755. I came with my father's family to live at Stoddard, near Chapel-le-frith. Went to a school kept by Mr. Henry Marchington, in Chinley, in 1757. Afterwards was under the care of the Rev. Mr. Gee, at Chapel-le-frith, June 15, 1758. Went to Mr. Moore's dancing school, and again July 31, 1760. In 1763, Oct. 6, I went to Warrington Academy. I preached for the first time at Hollostock [Allostock], Sept. 27, 1767. I supplied the congregation at Hale soon after. I preached there the first time Oct. 11, 1767. At Manchester the first time Feb. 12, 1769. I had the care of Hale from the latter end of 1767 to the middle of 1769. I went to reside at Salop [Shrewsbury] Aug., 1769, and arrived there on the 22 do. Nov. 17, 1771, the Society of Dissenters, at Manchester, made choice of me as successor to Mr. Mottershead. I preached my concluding sermon at Salop, Dec. 22, 1771, and my first sermon on settling at Manchester Dec. 29, 1771. I first boarded at Mr. John Hatfield's, then at Mrs. Manchester's, both in Princess Street. Began my school in 1774, which ended in 1787. I was married² March 6, 1775, by the Rev. Humphrey Owen, at the Old Church, Manchester. I became one of the tutors of the Manchester Academy in 1786, and resigned my connection with it in Sept., 1789.

Mr. Harrison continued his ministrations at Manchester until October, 1810, when failing health led to his resignation. He

¹ "History of Cross Street Chapel," by Richard Wade, p. 42.

² Mr. Harrison married Ann, daughter of John Touchet, by whom he became connected with one of the old Manchester families, which worshipped with Mr. Newcome in his temporary chapels.

died on 24th of November following, and was interred in the graveyard of the chapel. Upon his tombstone the following inscription has been placed :—

Here was interred the
Rev^d. RALPH HARRISON,
Of Manchester,
Died Nov^r. 24 1810,
Aged 62 years;
He was minister of this chapel 38 years.
REBECCA,
Wife of the Rev^d. Ralph Harrison,
Died Nov^r. 3rd. 1835,
Aged 78 years.

RALPH COOPER HARRISON, his son, died May 18th, 1804; aged 19 years. ANNE, his daugh^r., died Dec^r. 14th. 1811; aged 7 years. RALPH COOPER HARRISON, son of John & Sarah Harrison & grandson of the Rev^d. R. Harrison, died June 27th. 1817; aged 5 years and 3 months. Also SARAH ANN, their daughter, died Sep^r. 12th. 1817; aged 6 years & 10 months.

"Restrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears. They shall come again from the land of the enemy."

Also of MARIA, wife of the Rev^d. William Harrison, died January 30th. 1830; aged 46 years.

His son was the Rev. William Harrison, of Blackley, and descendants of his for several generations have exercised the ministry amongst the dissenters. Mr. Harrison, amongst other things, was a competent musician and the author of several popular hymn tunes—one in particular named "Warrington," in honour of the academy where he received his ministerial training, being long a favourite. The following anecdote respecting it is told :—

"A member of a country choir walked many miles to see the composer of a tune he so greatly admired. Arriving at the house, he asked if Mr. Harrison was in. The minister came, and the man eagerly inquired, 'Are yo' Mester Harrison?' Receiving an affirmative answer, he exclaimed 'Hey! I am glad to see the man that wrote "Warri'ton;'" and then he told how far he had journeyed to have that delight."¹

¹ "History of Cross Street Chapel," by R. Wade, p. 43.

Previous to his death Mr. Harrison had had associated with him in the pastorate the Rev. Thomas Barnes, D.D. He was born at Warrington, February 13th, 1747, and a fellow student with the Rev. Ralph Harrison, at the academy there. His first settlement was Cockey Moor, whence he removed to Manchester in 1780, and became, in addition, Principal and Divinity Tutor of the Manchester Academy in 1786. Mr. Harrison, it is said, was Unitarian, but Dr. Barnes was an Arian, and a secession from Cross Street took place in 1789 of a considerable number of persons who did not find his views sufficiently pronounced. These first erected a chapel in Mosley Street, on the spot now occupied by Nicoll and Company, tailors, and subsequently the congregation removed to Upper Brook Street. Dr. Barnes was one of the most popular preachers of his day, and in 1788 it was found necessary to enlarge the chapel. He died June 27th, 1810, a little over four months before his colleague, and was interred in the graveyard of the chapel. His tombstone reads thus:—

Here was interred the Body
of the
REV. THOMAS BARNES, D.D.,
Who departed this life on the 27th day of June, 1810,
In the 64th year of his age.
He was minister of this chapel 30 years.
ELIZABETH BARNES,
his wife,
Departed this life on the 6th day of January, 1814,
In the 69th year of her age.

He published several tractates of a theological and philosophical character.¹ The Rev. John Grundy, born at Hinckley, Leicestershire, in 1781, educated mainly by his maternal uncle, Dr. Estlin, of Bristol, spent one session at the Manchester Academy, being admitted September, 1797. He settled first at Bury St. Edmunds, then was at Nottingham from 1806 to 1810, becoming the successor to Dr. Barnes on September 14th of the latter year.² A zealous Unitarian, he began a series

¹ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol iii.

² So says Sir Thomas Baker; but the *Christian Reformer* for 1851, (p. 532) says he removed to Manchester in the spring of 1811.

of lectures on doctrinal subjects the year after his election, "which created in the town such a religious ferment as it had never before witnessed." Mr. Grundy removed to Liverpool in August, 1824, having accepted an invitation to become the pastor of Paradise Street Chapel (now Hope Street). His removal was made the occasion of a public dinner, when his congregation presented him with a silver tea service. Amongst the speakers was the Rev. George Harris, of Bolton, whose remarks gave rise to a lengthened discussion in a local paper, which was afterwards published in a volume, under the title of the "Manchester Socinian Controversy."¹ Mr. Grundy died at Bridport, May 9th, 1843. His colleague at Cross Street was the Rev. John Gooch Robberds, who was appointed in place of Mr. Harrison, December 19th, 1810. He was born at Norwich, May 18th, 1789, and educated at the Manchester College when it was at York, settling at Manchester on the completion of his college course.² Shortly after settlement he married Mary, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Wm. Turner, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and great grand-daughter of the Rev. John Turner, famed in connection with the Preston fight of 1715.³ Mr. Robberds continued his Manchester pastorate until his death, which took place on April 21st, 1854; and in the Cross Street Chapel is a marble tablet "raised by those whose homes were made bright by his earthly presence, and to whom his memory is an abiding sunshine." For many years he was also one of the Professors of the Manchester College. The Rev. John Hugh Worthington was chosen to succeed Mr. Grundy as co-pastor with Mr. Robberds in July, 1825. He was born at Leicester, November 11th, 1804, related to the Rev. Hugh Worth-

¹ This book is one of the most useful I have met with for historical purposes. The Rev. Richard Slate, Congregational minister of Stand, and afterwards of Preston, was one of the editors, and Mr. G. Hadfield, M.P., had a large interest in its publication.

² In the list of students educated at Manchester College, published in 1868, Mr. Robberds is put down as minister at Norwich from 1810 to 1811. This is probably due to the fact that he received an invitation to that place, but he chose Manchester.

³ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vols. i. and iii. In vol. i., p. 12, correct the Rev. John Gooch Robberds as here.

ington, minister of Dean Row in the early part of last century, and educated at Manchester College. "He was but a passing guest among his people," says Sir Thomas Baker, "scarce eighteen months had elapsed, before declining health warned him of a coming change." He died July 4th, 1827. He was engaged to Miss Harriet Martineau, the accomplished sister of Dr. James Martineau. The Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., born in 1805, another Manchester College student, was chosen to succeed him in 1828. His wife was Elizabeth Cleghorn Stevenson,¹ the gifted authoress of "Mary Barton" and other works of fiction. Mr. Gaskell's ministry is the longest of any which the Cross Street congregation has had, being three years longer than that of Mr. Mottershead. It was closed with his death June 11th, 1884. He was interred in the graveyard of Knutsford Chapel, where lies his wife also, but in the Cross Street Chapel are handsome marble tablets reciting the virtues of both. Like several of his predecessors, he held an appointment for many years as Professor in Manchester College. The death of Mr. Robberds left a vacancy which was filled up by the election of the Rev. James Panton Ham, who had been educated at Cheshunt College, and held for a short time Congregational pastorates in Maidenhead and Bristol. Subsequently becoming a Unitarian, he entered upon duty at Cross Street, October 8th, 1855, and removed to Essex Street, London, in March, 1859. He is now resident without charge at Southsea. He was followed January, 1860, by the Rev. James Drummond, M.A., now Dr. Drummond, educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and Manchester New College. In 1869 he resigned, to become Theological Professor of Manchester New College, of which institution he is still the honoured Principal. The Rev. S. A. Steinthal, educated at Manchester New College, and who had previously laboured at Bridgewater, Liverpool, and Platt, entered upon duty as successor to Mr. Drummond in 1870. The Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., whose ministerial training was received at Manchester New College and Jena, was appointed his colleague in 1887. Both ministers have recently resigned their charges, Mr. Drummond having accepted an invita-

¹ Vide ante p. 47, note 2.

tion to Cairo Street, Warrington. "Since the restoration of the chapel after it was gutted in 1715, with the exception of an enlargement of the pulpit end," says Sir Thomas Baker, "it now remains as it was then reinstated. The original outer wall to the stone facings at the corner may be readily distinguished, being slightly in advance of the front line of the more recent part." Subsequently the old pews were removed from the body of the chapel and modern benches substituted. Much might be written about the changes which have taken place in the surroundings of the chapel during the two centuries of its existence, being once in the midst of "cornfields and gardens, cottages and farmhouses," now of shops, warehouses, and crowded thoroughfares. Much also might be said about the celebrities who at different periods of its history have been associated with it, but the exigencies of space forbid. The reader, however, will find much interesting information on these matters in the histories of Sir Thomas Baker and Mr. Richard Wade, of which I have made large use in the foregoing account. The congregation is Unitarian, and has been so for many years.

II.—CANNON STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH: NOW CHORLTON ROAD CHURCH.

COLDHOUSE, in the neighbourhood of Shudehill, according to Dr. Halley, "has been successively the first religious home of Presbyterians, Independents, Scotch Baptists, and some minor sects of Methodists."¹ Not that each sect has "successively" met for worship in "the small and inconvenient meeting house," there, as his statement seems to imply, but that somewhere in the district it found its first home. Coldhouse is not very prepossessing in appearance to-day, but in the middle of last century, when the different denominations sprang into being, it was quite rural and charming. Mr. R. W. Procter, in his vivid style, gives the following interesting picture of this district before it became the heart of Manchester traffic:—

¹ "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 447.

While quietly pursuing our way along Hyde's Cross, Withy Grove, and the lower end of Shudehill, we skirted the "Old Gardens," and the "Old Infirmary Yard"—suggestive names no longer known to the directory. May not "Huntsman's Court," here still existing, denote that this district was once hunting ground? The neighbouring signboards seem appropriate—the Hare and Hounds, the Roebuck, and the Dog and Partridge, to wit. Perchance the White Horse would carry the huntsman proudly to the meet, while the Spread Eagle from its eyrie would watch the spirited chase over the Coldhouse meadows, and the Seven Stars would light the jovial scarlet coats to the squire's convivial board at Withingreave Hall.¹

An additional interest for Nonconformists gathers round this locality, because it was here that Mr. Newcome licensed a barn in 1672 for public worship.² This, then, was the "first religious home" of the Congregationalists, though the precise date of its becoming such has been lost, and the reason, too, is involved in some obscurity. Dr. Halley, who generally keeps clear of dates, gives the following account of the origin of Manchester Congregationalism:—

Modern Congregationalism in Manchester originated in the middle of the last century with a few good people who cared much more for Evangelical doctrine than for ecclesiastical polity. Some of them had seceded from Cross Street meeting-house on account of the new doctrine which had been introduced into that venerable sanctuary of nonconformity;³ some had immigrated from Scotland; and some had been religiously excited by the earnest preaching of the Methodists or Calvinistic itinerants from Yorkshire. They met for worship in a small and inconvenient meeting-house in Cold House Lane. . . . Their first pastor, the Rev. Caleb Warhurst, a man of fervent piety, exemplary character, loving spirit, and incessant labour, was ordained in 1756.⁴

¹ "Memorials of Bygone Manchester," p. 42.

² Some writers on Manchester Congregationalism, amongst them the late Dr. Macfadyen, and Dr. Mackennal, say that this was the building afterwards used by the Congregationalists. There is no solid proof of this. Sir Thomas Baker states that it was in "an unfrequented part of the town called Cold House," and in a note adds, "supposed to have been near Garden Street, Shudehill."—"Memorials," page 11).

³ In the account of Cross Street Chapel (vide ante p. 99) I have stated that there is much to favour Dr. Halley's contention here. Further evidence will be found in the fact that this happened in nearly every other Lancashire town. Modern Congregationalism almost invariably originated in the theological changes of a century and a half ago.

⁴ "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 447.

This is the earliest ascertainable date, but the congregation had probably been in existence a year or two already. Prominent amongst the originators of the movement was a Mr. Winterbottom, concerning whom Mr. Warhurst, in his diary, thus writes under date May 18th, 1759 :—

It is now three years since I made a conclusion with old Mr. Winterbottom to preach at Manchester. It was for this time. It is now expired. He is gone, and I am spared.¹

Mr. Warhurst, the first minister, was the son of Caleb Warhurst, a carpenter, of Bredbury, near Stockport. He was born February 20th, 1723, and does not appear to have had any collegiate training. His ordination took place November 10th, 1756, of which service he gives the following account :—

This day, in the most solemn manner, was I devoted to the service of God by ordination. The order of the work was thus. Mr. Scott, of Heckmondwike, in Yorkshire, began the service with prayer; sung the 48th Psalm; read the 3rd and 4th Chapters of 1 Tim.; prayed again more largely and more particularly for all the Church in general, and for me in particular; then preached from 2 Cor. 4-5, "For we preach not ourselves," &c. Then Mr. Walkden, of Stockport, proposed some questions to me and demanded my confession of Faith, which I delivered (but in great weakness). Then he prayed over me with laying on of hands. Then Mr. Pye, from Sheffield, proceeded to give me the charge from Acts, 20, 28; then he sung the 132 Psalm, and concluded with a fervent prayer for a blessing on the whole of the work. We dined together this day at Jer. Royle's. My honoured brethren, my father, Mr. Jesse — (Mr. Clegg, John Greenlees, deacons), and Brother Harrison, &c.

Mr. Warhurst had his troubles like most ministers. Under date February 7th, 1757, he writes :—

Paid a visit this day to Mr. Winterbottom, and found there are some pretended friends have been misrepresenting my behaviour, even as I expected; but as I have often found it good to cast my care upon the Lord, so in this I see his hand, and they that digged the pit are fallen into it. I dined with Mr. Winterbottom, along with some friends. Preached this evening, and was much troubled with my cough.

¹ Fragment of a MS. diary of the Rev. Caleb Warhurst. The original is in the possession of the family of the late Mr. William Armitage, Altrincham, a transcript of which was made by the late Dr. Macfadyen, which, by the kindness of Mrs. Macfadyen, I have been permitted to use.

On the 22nd of the same month he makes this entry :—

I find that I am offending some by my gestures in my work. Lord, thou knows my heart. If I am accounted besides myself it is to thee; but let me still approve myself to my God, and mind not what man says of me.

In 1762¹ the congregation found a home in a new building erected for the purpose in Hunter's Croft. This was the lower end of Cannon Street, and joined Hanging Ditch, where Dr. John



John Byrom

Byrom lived. It is to this interesting man, the author of the popular Christmas hymn "Christians, awake, salute the happy morn," that we are indebted for the exact date of the opening of this new meeting-house. In his diary, under date Tuesday, April 20th, 1762, he records a visit from the Rev John Newton :—

¹ The Trust Deed bears date Nov. 25th, 1761, and the building is said to have been erected under the superintendence of Messrs. Arthur Clegg, John Spear, Henry Hope, and others.



BYROM'S HOUSE, HANGING DITCH.



KERSAL CELL, A SEAT OF THE BYRONS.

LANGTON & CO.

This afternoon Mr. Newton, from Liverpool, called upon me. . . . he came here upon account of the opening of the new meeting at the upper end of this croft to-morrow, and to see some ministers and friends with whom he was acquainted.¹

That the church was Congregational or Independent from the first is made clear by the following extract from the Rev. John Newton's letter to Mr. Houghton, dated November 18th, 1762 :—

When the Doctor [John Byrom] has done with the book I would be obliged to him, if he pleases, to let a servant leave it for Mr. Warhurst, at Mr. Clegg's, in Turner Street. This gentleman is minister of the Independent Chapel, and a truly humble, pious man.²

Further evidence appears in the "lengthy document" prefixed to their Church Book, dated 1762, from which the following sentences are taken :—

With respect to their Church Order and Discipline, that which is practised in Independent Churches was looked upon to be most agreeable to Scripture, and therefore attempted. But it is now acknowledged both by Pastor and People that they have not kept so close to this Faith and Order of the Gospel as they ought to have done; Therefore, for the better establishment, well-being, and prosperity of this church (now removing to a new meeting house, Built for that purpose in Hunter's Croft, Manchester), it is judged expedient that they should be more explicite³ both with respect to their Faith and Order than heretofore. And, therefore, the said Confession of Faith, and

¹ "Remains of John Byrom" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xlv.), p. 636.

² Ibid, p. 639. Dr. Halley, in the passage previously cited, says that the church originated with persons who "cared much more for Evangelical doctrine than for ecclesiastical polity." So surely should it be with all churches; but they "cared" enough for "ecclesiastical polity" to be even then differentiated from any other sect by a name which the church has handed on unchanged. Dr. Waddington, too, like Dr. Halley, unduly depreciates the Congregational character of the church in its earliest years. He says—"Congregational principles were imperfectly understood in Manchester, and only partially applied. The original church, from its formation, was enveloped in a 'Scotch mist.'" Some of the members had a slight craze on the question of "ruling elders." ("Congregational History," vol. iv., p. 51.) In Caleb Warhurst's days the "mist" was not so thick, and Dr. Waddington is more accurate when he calls the "craze" after "ruling elders" a "slight" one.

This does not sound like indifference towards "ecclesiastical polity."

the Discipline, Order, and Practise of Independent Churches is here wrote down. In order, To be afresh assented to, and faithfully followed, by all those that are already in the Church, or may hereafter be Receiv'd into it.

Nor was this all. In 1764¹ a carefully drawn up "Confession of Faith, with a Form of Church Government" was issued by them, whose Congregational character is beyond all question. It begins :

"The CHURCH OF CHRIST meeting together for Publick Worship, in a meeting house in Hunter's-Croft, Manchester ; Unto all Christians, into whose hands these lines may fall ; wisheth all Grace and Peace." The reason of its publication is given in the following passage :—

We find there are some around us who are speaking Evil of the things they know not ; and others who are more candid, desiring to know what our Faith and Order is. For the Conviction of the former and information of the latter, we have thought proper to make these more public, hoping they will be found, upon impartial examination, to be agreeable to the Faith and Order that was once delivered to the saints.

Prominence is given in Dr. Mackennal's charming "Life of Dr. Macfadyen" to the story of "the ruling eldership in Cannon Street Church," previously referred to, and the document just named is adduced as evidence. He says :—

Presumably, the church document of 1762 was drawn up by Caleb Warhurst, and in it especial care is taken to identify the elder with the bishop, or pastor, or teacher, and to specify as the work of the deacon the assistance of the pastor "in the more external concerns of the church." In 1764, however, Mr. Warhurst published "A Form of Church Government, deduced from the Holy Scripture, drawn up for the use of the Church of Christ, worshipping in the Meeting-house, Hunter's Croft, Manchester," in which distinct mention is made of the "Ruling Elder, who assists the Pastor

¹ A copy of this interesting document, printed by R. Whitworth, Manchester, in 1764, is in my possession. Many of our churches to-day would be none the worse for having it circulated in their midst. Dr. Halley, referring to the secessionists from Cannon Street who erected the chapel in Mosley Street, says that they "composed the largest and most minute declaration of faith and order" he had ever seen. If larger than that of the Hunter's Croft Church then it was large, for this occupies over eighty printed pages, octavo size, and is quite a little compendium of theology.

in ruling and government.” Mr. Warhurst died in 1765, and the Church Book does not contain any record of elders during his pastorate. There may, however, have been elders at this time, for on October 30th, 1778, when Timothy Priestley had been two years minister of the church, one Andrew Patten writes a letter complaining that “a few men have taken upon them to overturn the government of this church, and to set up one of their own invention.” He declares that ruling elders are essential to the church as Christ intended it.¹

I am persuaded, after a careful review of the whole case, that whatever significance “the ruling eldership” came to have for the church in subsequent years, it had little for it during Caleb Warhurst’s days, and that the document of 1764 is no serious modification of the earlier “Confession of Faith.” Respecting the church officers, for instance, it thus reads :—

The officers which CHRIST hath appointed ordinarily to wait upon Him in every church are *Bishops* and *Deacons*. A *Bishop* is a church overseer, a *Presbyter* a teaching or ruling Elder immediately under CHRIST, the Head of the Church, and constituted by Him, in an ordinary way, to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, and maintain due Order and Discipline in his House, according to his Word.

He describes the “teaching Elder” as either a pastor, who “goes before the church in the administration of the Word, Prayer, Seals, and the Keys, according to gospel constitution ;” or, a Teacher, who, “though he may dispense other ordinances, yet is especially to give diligence to, and wait on teaching.” “A ruling Elder” is one who “assists the pastor in ruling and government ; or in maintaining a diligent watch over the congregation (or, in case of the want of the pastor or teacher), to go before the church in receiving in, admonishing, or casting out ; or in other matters of order, as the case may require. All these over-seeing officers are not absolutely necessary to the due organisation of the church ; but where there is a *Pastor* and *Deacon*, that church is fully organised for its full edification ; the pastoral office containing in it all teaching and ruling Charge ; and if the Pastor is able to discharge the whole, he undoubtedly may ; but if through his weakness, or the increase of the church, there is need of further help, it’s the

¹ Page 103.

duty of the church to call in and ordain such *assisting officers*." The one clear point in all this is that Caleb Warhurst considered a church to be "fully organised for its full edification" with its two officers, pastor and deacon; and that the ruling elder might be called into being according to the convenience of the church. Probably, Caleb Warhurst himself found that he was "able to discharge the whole," and the ruling elder was more an idea than a fact in his day. The statement of Brother Patten, in the days of Timothy Priestley, that "ruling elders are *essential* to a church, as Christ intended it," shows a considerable remove from the position of the church in its earliest days. Caleb Warhurst lived only a short time after the publication of his "Confession of Faith." He died of consumption, November 5th, 1765, in the 43rd year of his age, and according to the custom of the time was interred beneath the pulpit of the chapel in which he had laboured.

Upon his tombstone, which was removed to the church at Chorlton Road, and which unfortunately was lost during one of the building enlargements, the following inscription was placed:—

Here resteth the remains
of the
REVD. CALEB WARHURST, a servant of Jesus
Christ, by whose labours under God,
this place of worship, together with the first
Church assembling in it, had their rise,
Who departed this life
Novr. 5th, 1765,
In the 43rd year of his age.

Dr. Mackennal says that in some respects he was like Henry Newcome, "a grave man," his diary being "full of self upbraiding and foreboding," and that "the sensitiveness of habit, which lent a charm to his preaching, made him a constant sufferer."

His successor was the Rev. Timothy Priestley, younger brother of Dr. Joseph Priestley. He was educated by the Rev. James Scott, at Heckmondwike Academy, entering about 1756, and being the second on the roll of students. He settled first at Kipping, near Bradford, whence he removed to Manchester about 1766. Dr. Halley says:—

¹ "Life of Dr. Macfadyen," p. 101.

Mr. Priestley, although a preacher of considerable ability, was not very successful nor very happy in Manchester. He was troubled either with a quarrelsome temper or with quarrelsome deacons, for the church book contains abundant evidence of discord in the vestry. The deacons lectured him about his irreverence and irregularities, while he paid very little respect to their lectures. He was charged with irreverently ascending the pulpit with his hat on his head, and with making packing cases on Sunday nights. As to his wearing his hat on the pulpit stairs, he seems to have treated the charge as an impertinence unworthy of notice; and as to the packing cases, while the deacons kept him miserably poor he thought it was his duty to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," as well as to "remember the Sabbath day," when the demand for these cases was urgent, as it often was previously to the sailing of an American vessel from Liverpool, he and his family worked in the night intervening between Sunday and Monday, but he never acknowledged that he began before the clock struck twelve.¹

The reader is asked to supplement this view of Mr. Priestley by Dr. Mackennal's, who says that he "lived in a bluff, objective fashion, troubled with no self-introspection and few doubts. He was a strong preacher, careless of personal dignity, and of abounding audacity, both in his pulpit utterances and in private speech." The church officers remonstrated with him for engaging in "secret trade," and especially for being associated with the "liquor business." Eventually, he was "formally dismissed from his office on April 14th, 1784, only two hands being held up in his favour. In all this unpleasant matter there is the amplest acknowledgment of Mr. Priestley's eminent preaching powers, and very reluctantly is his eighteen years' pastorate brought to an end."²

During his ministry the chapel was enlarged by the removal of two cottages which stood in front.

From Manchester he removed to Dublin, and some two years afterwards became pastor of the Jewin Street Congregational Church, London, where he laboured until his death. He "departed this life at Islington in great peace and tranquillity a few weeks before completing his 80th year," on Saturday night, April 23rd, 1814.³ He was interred in Bunhill Fields on the 29th,

¹ "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 448.

² "Life of Dr. Macfadyen," p. 101.

³ "Bunhill Memorials," by J. A. Jones, p. 223.



THE REV. TIMOTHY PRIESTLEY.

when the Rev. Joseph Cockin, of Halifax, delivered the funeral address, and on the following Sabbath the Rev. G. Burder preached his funeral sermon at Jewin Street, "to a very crowded congregation, from John xvii., 24."¹

The following inscription was placed upon his tombstone:—

Sacred to the Memory of the late
REV. TIMOTHY PRIESTLEY,
who for more than half a century preached with fidelity and success
the unsearchable riches of Christ ;
twenty-five years of which period he was
Pastor of the Independent Church
in Jewin Street, London.
Born June 19, 1734; died April 23, 1814.

With the theological views of his brother, Dr. Joseph Priestley, he had no sympathy, and it is recorded that "when the dissenting ministers applied to Parliament for a repeal of the penal laws, Mr. Priestley was applied to for his signature, but refused to give it, from an apprehension that it would be lending his assistance in advancing the cause of heterodoxy."² In addition to a few sermons which he published he was the author of "The Christian's Looking-glass," "Family Exercises," a large "Family Bible," with notes, in two volumes, and "The Christian's Magazine or Gospel Repository."³ The next minister was the Rev. David Bradberry,⁴ a convert of the Rev. George Whitefield. He was educated for the ministry by the Revs. John Conder, D.D., and John Walker, at their academy, when it was held at Mile End—one of the predecessors of New College. Mr. Bradberry preached his first sermon at Ramsgate, in Kent, on October 10th, 1767, and in the December following he was called to the

¹ "Evangelical Magazine," for 1814, p. 278.

² Wilson's "Dissenting Meeting Houses," vol. iii., p. 352.

³ The first volume of this magazine, published in 1790, edited by Mr. Priestley, and dedicated to Lady Huntingdon, whose intimate friendship he enjoyed, is in my possession. It is an exceedingly interesting publication, issued evidently with a view to counteract the influence of Unitarian doctrines, which had then become common, and of which his brother was so earnest and able an advocate. How long it lived I do not know.

⁴ This, and not "Bradbury," I believe to be the correct spelling.

pastorate of the church there. He continued to serve them in the pulpit, but did not return an answer to the invitation until April, 1769. His ordination took place on Wednesday, October 24th, 1770, when the "Rev. Messrs. Brewer, of Stepney; Rogers, of Southwark; Shepherd, of Tunbridge Wells; Jenkings, of Maidstone; and Purchase, of Margate,"¹ assisted in the service. It is interesting to note that Mr. Whitefield concluded his labours in England by preaching his last two sermons at Ramsgate at Mr. Bradberry's request. Detained by adverse winds in the Downs, he was prevailed upon to preach an ordination sermon at Deal, and thence to go to Ramsgate. In one of his letters, dated Deal, September 15th, 1769, he thus writes:—

Mr. Bradberry came, and put me under an arrest, and is carrying me away to Ramsgate. I hope to arrest some poor runaway bankrupts for the Captain of our Salvation.

His journal further says:—

We reached Ramsgate about *two*, took some refreshment, and there I preached about *four*, not to a very large, but an attentive and affected, auditory. This I did also the morning following. The people's behaviour here was so unmistakably generous, frank, genteel, and Christian that I know not where I have been more pleased and delighted.²

Mr. Whitefield immediately afterwards crossed the Atlantic, and died September 30th, 1770. Eighteen years Mr. Bradberry laboured with considerable success at Ramsgate, removing thence to Manchester, having accepted the invitation of the church, August 14th, 1785. Dr. Halley gives the following account of his Manchester ministry:—

He betook himself not to the making of packing-cases, but of epic poems. Mr. Bradbury's employment, although more respectable, was, I fear, less lucrative than that of his worthy predecessor. In addition to the perplexity of a limited income, he was troubled by the disputes of his people, and especially by the pertinacious attempts of some Scotch members to appoint

¹ "Church History of Kent," by the Rev. T. Timpson, p. 425.

² *Ibid*, p. 426.

ruling elders, and to introduce¹ some other Presbyterian ways into the church. Mr. Bradbury was not the man to be ruled by either Scotchmen or Englishmen, elders or deacons, and therefore, after much unhappy controversy, and a large secession of members, he resigned his charge and left the neighbourhood.²

The year of his removal from Manchester has not been ascertained, but about 1793 he was minister at Glovers' Hall, London. He died January 13th, 1803, and was interred at Bunhill Fields, on which occasion "the Rev. Mr. Humphries, of Southwark, spoke over his grave; and on the following Sabbath Mr. Simpson, of Hoxton, preached his funeral sermon."³ The following inscription was placed upon his tombstone:—

The Rev. DAVID BRADBERRY,

Died January 13, 1833,

Aged 67 years;

Having been a preacher of the Gospel for 42 years.

The Rev. William Roby took charge of the "diminished and unpromising congregation, which remained in Cannon Street meeting-house."⁴ In previous volumes of this work will be found lengthy notices of this good man, whose name is so deeply interwoven with the story of Lancashire Congregationalism during the present century. Born at Haigh, near Wigan, "like his father, an orthodox Churchman," he was converted and led into Nonconformity by the preaching of the Rev. John Johnson,⁵ one of Lady

¹ Dr. Mackennal, quoting from "a more accurate account," says that one of the things alleged against Mr. Bradberry was his "endeavour to remove the elders from their office, and to break up that form of government under which they had been admitted as members." ("Life of Dr. Macfadyen," p. 103.) The Presbyterian usages had already been introduced, and Mr. Bradberry said that "he and the church had only exercised the power with which Christ had invested them, and which all Independent churches claim by His authority, of removing as well as choosing their own officers."

² "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 449.

³ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1803, p. 211.

⁴ Halley's "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 450.

⁵ Mr. Johnson followed Mr. Roby to Manchester as minister of St. George's Church, originally intended for Episcopalian consecration. He died there September 22nd, 1804, and Mr. Roby preached his funeral sermon from the appropriate words, "My Father, my Father."

Huntingdon's ministers at Wigan. After a brief training at Trevecca he was sent to preach amongst other places at Worcester, Reading, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, eventually becoming associated in the ministry with Mr. Johnson, at Wigan. On Mr. Johnson's removal to Tyldesley, in 1789, Mr. Roby was left in sole charge of the congregation at Wigan, and on September 20th of that year he was ordained as such, having to go up to London for the purpose. From Wigan he removed to Manchester about 1795. At the commencement of his ministry here it is recorded that his congregation "seldom exceeded 150 persons," but his earnest and manifold labours soon began to be felt. It is a singular defect in Dr. Halley's interesting notices of Mr. Roby that he makes no reference to his connection with the planting of Congregationalism in Scotland. Two years after his settlement at Cannon Street, on June 27th, 1797, with the consent of his church, Mr. Roby went for a month's absence and hard work in Scotland. His friend, whom he had especially gone to assist, was the Rev. James Haldane, minister of a Congregational Church at Edinburgh. The clergy were all in arms against the new preachers, whom they called "vagrants." Mr. Roby's experiences during his journey from Edinburgh to Perth in pursuit of his mission are thus related by himself:—

Both the kirks and meeting-houses are shut against us by the solemn orders of the general Assembly and Synods of the secession, so that we are obliged to preach in the open air, except the weather force us to take shelter in a tent or barn. When the course of my itineracy for this week is completed, I shall have preached ten times in five days, riding on an average about twenty miles each day.¹

Scottish Congregationalism has had a hard struggle to obtain its present respectable position, and it is no little honour for Lancashire to have sent one of its best and most saintly men to help to start it on its way. Mr. Roby returned to Manchester on the 30th of July, and whilst continuing to serve his own church loyally,² the needs

¹ Waddington's "Congregational History," vol. iv., p. 103.

² On the Sunday he usually preached three times in his own chapel and once at the New Cross, in the open air, having prayer meetings during the week in different parts of the town.

of the county began to lie upon his heart with greater weight than ever. Mainly with him, therefore, originated the scheme for evangelising Lancashire, which subsequently developed into the present County Union. The success of his ministry made necessary a larger place of worship, and according to a resolution of the church, it was agreed in 1807 to erect a new chapel in Grosvenor Street, but to continue Cannon Street Chapel for a time as a branch station. In the account of that church, further information respecting Mr. Roby must be sought.¹ The removal was not effected without friction. Five members, "with the connivance of the trustees," taking advantage of a clause in the trust deed, "which gives to three members power to prevent the settling of the property, agreed to constitute themselves into a church, and to continue Cannon Street Chapel as a Nonconformist place of worship."²

Mr. Roby writes respecting this :—

The members who withdrew in the course of the year took possession of the old chapel in Cannon Street contrary to a mutual agreement formed at a church meeting, held according to public notice.

The Rev. William Marsh was called in the midsummer of 1808 to the pastorate of the congregation which remained in Cannon Street. He had previously laboured for a short time at Dukinfield, and is described as coming thence from London. At Dukinfield he was ordained May 21st, 1807, when the Rev. Messrs. Blackburn, of Delph; Hudson, of Tintwistle; Meldrum, of Hatherlow; Whitehead, of Charlesworth; Mather, of New Windsor; Ashton, of

¹ Vide p. 133.

² The Chorlton Road Congregational Church claims to be the Cannon Street Church in continuity, and so the oldest Congregational Church in Manchester. My opinion is not of much value, but it has always seemed to me that such a contention can hardly be sustained, though for the sake of convenience I have made the history continuous. Unless the resolution of the church in a matter of this kind is decisive, no resolution can be. St. George's Road Congregational Church, Bolton, is a similar case, and its claim to be the old Duke's Alley Church in continuity has been allowed. (Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. iii., p. 21.) Happily, however, this has long ceased to be a bone of contention amongst the Manchester churches, and is only a point of interest.

Stockport; Hampshire, of Henley, conducted the service.¹ In September, 1812, Mr. Marsh removed from Manchester to Charlesworth, where he laboured until his death in 1821. His successor was the Rev. William Evans, from Aylesbury, who undertook the charge April 25th, 1813, and removed in September, 1817. The Rev. Robert Allott, who had been educated at Rotherham College, and had exercised a brief ministry at Eastwood, in Yorkshire, accepted the invitation of the Cannon Street Church, July 25th, 1819, and was publicly set apart as pastor on November 12th following, when the Revs. J. A. Coombs, S. Bradley, W. Roby, and James Bennett, D.D., from Rotherham College, took part in the service. He resigned on August 2nd, 1822, and subsequently laboured at Walsall, in Staffordshire, where he died suddenly in 1834. In September, 1824, the Rev. John Whitridge became the minister. He was born near Bootle, in Cumberland, on May 23rd, 1790, his father being "lineally descended from the family of Anne Askew, who, under the reign of Mary, boldly endured martyrdom for the sake of the truth." He was educated for the ministry by Dr. Williams, at Rotherham College, and ordained on July 7th, 1814, over the church at Carlisle, when a goodly number of ministers assisted in the service. In June, 1819, he resigned to become Principal of the academy for training ministers at Oswestry and assist his uncle, the Rev. John Whitridge, in the pastorate there. From this place he removed to Manchester, where he exerted himself "much on behalf of the young, establishing week-night lectures and Bible classes in various parts of the town for their benefit." Failing health compelled him to resign his charge on September 23rd, 1827, and after a few years' residence at Harrogate, where he preached at what was called Cross Chapel, he retired into his native county of Cumberland. He took occasional duty whilst health permitted, and died at Carlisle, July 28th, 1854. On the 7th of October, 1827, the Rev. Samuel Bradley entered upon duty as successor to Mr. Whitridge. He was educated at Rotherham College, and ordained as pastor of Doncaster Congregational Church, September 17th, 1800. He left shortly afterwards for Mosley Street, Manchester,

¹ "Evangelical Magazine," for 1807, p. 532.

relinquishing this charge for Cannon Street. Soon after his settlement the Cannon Street Chapel was rebuilt and enlarged, as the subjoined passage shows :—

Since the settlement of the Rev. Samuel Bradley at this place of worship, the congregation having very greatly increased, together with the unsafe state of part of the building, it was deemed necessary, last summer, almost to rebuild as well as to enlarge the chapel, which was reopened on the 3rd of August, 1828, when Mr. Bradley preached in the morning from Haggai ii., 9, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former," &c. The expense incurred has amounted to upwards of £1,600, towards which the friends have subscribed about one thousand, and the remainder they hope, ere long, to pay off. From the venerable church assembling in this place nearly all the Independent congregations in Lancashire¹ have arisen.²

Mr. Bradley resigned in April, 1844, and was followed by the Rev. James Dean. He was a native of Manchester, and a member of the church at Mosley Street, during the pastorate of Mr. Bradley, by whom he was introduced into the Blackburn Academy. Previous to his coming to Manchester he had laboured several years at Aldermanbury Postern, London, and Topsham, in Devonshire. The *Evangelical Magazine* for August, 1844, has the following respecting his acceptance of the Manchester pastorate :—

The Rev. J. Dean has accepted the unanimous invitation of the church at Cannon Street, Manchester, vacant by the resignation of the Rev. S. Bradley, the former pastor of Mr. Dean, and who for forty-three years laboured with untiring assiduity in the good cause. On his retirement, he had the pleasure of welcoming his successor, and of approving the choice of the church.

Mr. Dean resigned owing to ill health, October 1st, 1847, and died at Clapton, September 18th, 1857, in his 56th year. The next minister was the Rev. William Parkes, a student from Lancashire College. He began his labours July 9th, 1848, and resigned September 23rd, 1855, removing to Monkwearmouth. Subsequently he was at Sunderland, and Park Road, Blackburn.³ The Rev. James Bruce, from Bamford, was minister from June,

¹ This is a very big thing to say, though the church has a most honourable record from that point of view.

² "Evangelical Magazine," for 1829, p. 198.

³ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. ii.

1856, to September, 1859.¹ In December of the latter year, the Rev. Professor Newth, of Lancashire College, elder brother of the Rev. Dr. Newth, late honoured Principal of New College, London, "consented to accept the office of preacher." In the Chorlton Road Congregational Church a tablet has been erected in memory of Professor Newth, upon which the following inscription has been placed :—

To the Memory of
The Rev^d. ALFRED NEWTH,
for nearly nineteen years Professor of
Philosophy and Old Testament Criticism
in Lancashire Independent College,
and for the last six years
Professor also of Ecclesiastical History.
THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY
Members of Chorlton Road Congregational Church
to commemorate
their high appreciation of the wisdom with
which, as president of the Church, he managed
its affairs during the early years of its
existence in this neighbourhood, and of the
admiration inspired in all who knew him
by the simplicity of purpose with which,
as a man, a scholar, and a preacher,
he devoted himself to the work
of his Master.
He was born Dec. 23, 1811,
and died Oct. 23, 1875.

The following passage tells how the removal of the church from Cannon Street to Chorlton Road, right away on the southern side of the city, was brought about :—

In consequence of the prevailing tendency of the worshippers to reside in the suburbs, the congregation has been growing less for some years. The office-bearers have made attempts to devise some plan by which to meet the difficulty caused by this condition of matters, and eventually it was resolved to seek the benefit of the Charitable Trusts Acts, the Commissioners under which, on the 11th October, 1856, gave power to sell the property. A sale was effected on the 2nd March, 1860, when the property was disposed of for the sum of £2,800.²

¹ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. iii.

² Brief history of Chorlton Road Church, deposited in cavity of foundation stone of the present building, July 17th, 1860, and copied in the "Chorlton Road Church Manual" for 1886.

The purchaser was Mr. J. H. Boardman, and its subsequent history is given in the following passage from *The Manchester City News* for August 24th, 1889 :—

We took it, in 1862, on a lease of twenty-one years. At that time there was no organ in the chapel, but the pews and interior fittings were much as they had ever been. It was converted into a yarn warehouse for us by Messrs. Southern, of Salford, and the pews and pulpit were sold by them to a broker of old material. When the pulpit was removed a gravestone was found underneath, upon which was the name of the first minister, who was and is now interred there. The stone was sold by the broker either to Sir James Watts, the trustee, or to someone connected with the Chorlton Road Independent Chapel, where, I suppose, it can be seen. The ground floor was never disturbed. There are three or four interments, but no stone to indicate where any have taken place. The area, 460 square yards, was flagged over, and no disturbance took place during our tenancy. The chapel keeper's house—two storeys next Print Street, and three next Back Cannon Street—was formerly used as a vestry and school, and a part was *then* open (without roof) for interments. Mr. Boardman converted this into a warehouse for us in 1864, retaining the old buildings. About this time the names on a few old gravestones were removed, part covered with asphalt, and part flagged. There was, I believe, no disturbance of the graves.

WILLIAM LEE,
of W. and R. K. Lee.

The removed church met at first in a handsome iron building sixty-five feet by thirty-two, erected in Sloane Street, which was opened on Sunday, December 20th, 1857, when sermons were preached by the Revs. A. Thomson, M.A., Dr. McKerrow, and James Gwyther. The schools in Chorlton Road were completed first, being opened on November 25th, 1860, and here the congregation worshipped until the new church in course of erection was finished. With sitting accommodation for about 800 worshippers the sacred edifice was opened on September 12th, 1861, when the Rev. S. Martin, of London, was the preacher. On the following Sunday morning, Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, preached, and in the evening Dr. Binney, of London. From an interesting statement read at the opening service it appears that :—

The builder's work, &c., had amounted to £5,217, and the total expenses, with the building, were £7,906. The receipts, including £2,800, the pro-

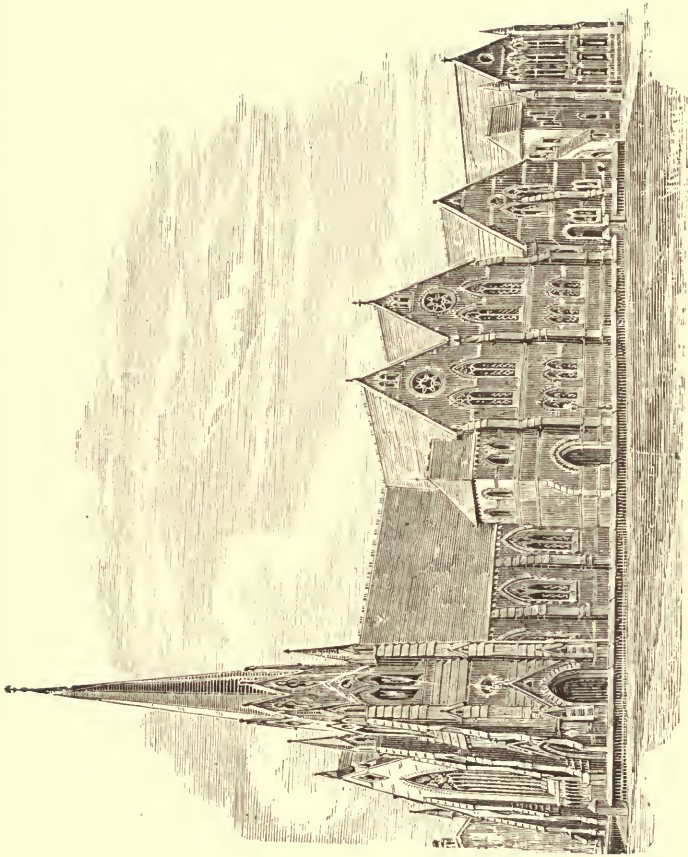
ceeds of the sale of the Cannon Street Chapel, which the present edifice supersedes, amounted to £6,243, leaving a deficiency of £1,600 to be cleared off. This sum was raised by the opening services; and the Sanctuary is a free will offering to the service of Almighty God.¹



THE REV. J. A. MACFADYEN, M.A., D.D.

It has already been stated that after the resignation of Mr. Bruce the charge of the church was entrusted to Professor Newth until the Rev. J. A. Macfadyen, M.A., began his ministry on May 17th, 1863. In the necessarily limited space

¹ "Congregational Year Book" for 1862, p. 296.



CHORLTON ROAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

at my disposal it is impossible to do anything like justice to such a ministry as this. Happily a worthy memorial of him from the pen of his near neighbour and friend, Dr. Mackennal, has recently been published, which tells at length the beautiful story of his life and work. Born at Greenock, on January 22nd, 1837, educated at Glasgow University, and afterwards at Lancashire College, he settled in 1860 at St. Helens.¹ The church at Chorlton Road had already made his acquaintance during his student days, and seen in him a possible future pastor. Consequently an earnest invitation was sent to him at St. Helens, which, after much hesitation, he accepted. The growing congregations at Chorlton Road necessitated several enlargements, until now there is accommodation for 1,300 people. "New schools were built," says Dr. Mackennal, "containing a large room for 800 children, together with sixteen class-rooms, superintendents' and secretaries' rooms, and a library having over 2,000 volumes. . . . The church membership grew from 70 in 1863, to 837 in 1889; the number of scholars from 350, under the care of 30 teachers, to 1,040 under 86 teachers."² Mission work engaged a large share of Dr. Macfadyen's attention, as also did the planting of new churches in the neighbourhood; and the claims of Congregationalism in general were felt by him as by few men. In 1884 the church, at his suggestion, agreed to inaugurate a fund, which in the end amounted to £12,650, for some needful improvements in the buildings at Chorlton Road, and at the various mission stations. A bazaar held in the Free Trade Hall, in March, 1888, realised more than £3,140, the sum still needed, and set the church free from pecuniary burdens. His "labours more abundant" brought to a close, all too soon, a valuable life on November 21st, 1889. A deeply impressive memorial service, on Monday morning, November 25th, was conducted in the Chorlton Road Church, by Drs. Hannay (himself to hear the home call shortly), Falding (since deceased), Maclaren, and the Revs. Thomas Green, M.A., and R. M. Davies, "white-headed men, the muscular tension of whose faces was visible in the sombre light." The body was afterwards laid in the

¹ Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. iv.

² "Life of Dr. Macfadyen," p. 110.

Southern Cemetery, Withington, where the late Rev. T. C. Finlayson offered a brief prayer, and pronounced the benediction. A granite Iona cross has since been placed over his grave, the cost of which has been met by a fund “quietly opened immediately” after his death. The amount subscribed was £6,749 15s. 6d., of which sum members of the Chorlton Road Church contributed nearly £3,000. The purpose of the fund was to make more adequate provision for his family than Dr. Macfadyen had been able to do. In 1892, also, the Chorlton Road Church placed in the east end of the building a large stained glass “Macfadyen Memorial Window.” “The theme illustrated,” says the “Congregational Year Book” for 1893, “is the continuity of the love of God through the ages. This theme was suggested as being in full consonance with the life, teachings, and work of Dr. Macfadyen; and the direction given to it was to witness from the writings of priest, prophet, evangelist, and apostle, and from the Saviour Himself, to the truth of the story. The holy men chosen to bear this testimony are Moses and David, as representing the Old, and John and Paul, as representing the New, dispensation, united and harmonised in the person of our Lord, the central figure. The figures are placed in the order named.” It ought to be stated that in Mrs Macfadyen the Doctor found a valuable helper in all his work, and that one of his sons, the Rev. D. Macfadyen, B.A., is the pastor of the Congregational Church at St. Ives, Hunts. For a few years Dr. Macfadyen had as helpers the Revs. A. N. Johnson, M.A., now the Home Secretary of the London Missionary Society, and A. H. Smith, M.A. The present pastor is the Rev. Albert Goodrich, D.D., who was educated at Hackney, and began his ministerial life at Braintree, Essex, in 1865. Thence he removed, in 1876, to Elgin Place, Glasgow, and commenced his duties at Chorlton Road on November 2nd, 1890. Dr. Goodrich has already won a large place in the confidence of the Congregational Churches of this county, and is proving himself to be a worthy successor to Dr. Macfadyen. He received his degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Glasgow, in April, 1889.

The following succinct account of the various mission stations, which form so important a feature in the work of the Chorlton Road Church, is copied from a “Bazaar Handbook,” issued in

1888. A few sentences have been added for the sake of completeness:—

MELBOURNE STREET MISSION.—This originated in a ragged school which met for many years in one of the railway arches in Hewitt Street, off Deansgate, in the midst of a dense population, only a fraction of which attended places of worship. The increasing attendance compelled the removal of the ragged school in 1874 to larger premises in Pryme Street, where it continued to be managed with much success by an undenominational committee. Twelve years ago it passed under the oversight of Chorlton Road Church, and in due time commodious premises were erected in Melbourne Street. The hall was opened 13th July, 1884. At this mission a branch church has been established, having a membership of ninety-nine persons.

TATTON STREET MISSION is an old-established mission which was originated by friends principally from Cavendish Street. In the year 1873 the workers there formally connected their mission with Chorlton Road Church, but, as the premises were merely altered cottage property, it was a necessity that a new building should be erected. The site originally selected for the new hall was in Barrack Street, but before operations were commenced an undenominational effort which had been successfully carried on in Lower Moss Lane joined its forces to those of Tatton Street, and the friends of the united missions resolved to erect larger premises than were at first contemplated. The hall of the united mission was opened 4th October, 1885. There is also a branch church here with sixty-one members.

RUSSELL STREET MISSION.—This mission originated in an Adult Bible Class, which met in a cottage at Ann Street, Hulme. The success attending its operations obliged the Ann Street friends, at the close of 1875, to make arrangements for renting a large building in Lower Moss Lane, to carry on the work for which the mission had been established. About this time it became known that the premises called "The City Road Congregational Church" were on sale, and they were ultimately bought for £2,100. Necessary repairs, and the addition of new galleries, brought up the total cost to £3,500. Twelve years ago the mission was formed into a branch of Chorlton Road Church. Number of members eighty-two.

All these branches have their members in communion with the Chorlton Road Church. At the beginning of 1893 the total membership of the church was 1,104, of whom 242 belonged to the mission stations.

III.—GROSVENOR STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

THE removal of the Rev. William Roby and his congregation from Cannon Street to larger and more convenient premises in Grosvenor Street has been referred to in the previous section.¹ The decision of the church at a legally called meeting was taken in 1807, and in accordance therewith “226 members with their pastor, the Rev. William Roby, and their deacons—Hiram Holden, Thomas Livesey, and Jonathan Lees—removed to their new sanctuary, taking with them the church book which had been in use since the year 1805, and which commences with a continued list of 137 members, and remained in use until the year 1821.” From the *Evangelical Magazine*, for 1808, the following account of the opening services is extracted :—

On Thursday, December 3, 1807, a new chapel, situated in Grosvenor Street, looking up Gore Street into Piccadilly, Manchester, was opened for the accommodation of Mr. Roby and his congregation. Between 40 and 50 ministers assembled on the occasion. Mr. Bowden, of Darwen ; Mr. Blackburn, of Delph ; Messrs. S. Bradley, R. Bradley, and Jack, of Manchester, engaged in the service. Mr. Charrier, of Lancaster, preached in the morning from Ps. cxxxii., 13-16, and Mr. Evans, of Stockport, in the evening, from Isa. lvi., 7.²

For more than twenty years Mr. Roby continued to exercise his ministry here with all the marks of success which had attended his earlier efforts. Encouraged by Mr. Robert Spear, in addition to his pastoral duties he conducted an academy for ministerial students, several of whom, animated by the missionary enthusiasm of their tutor, exercised most valuable ministries in different parts of Lancashire. His life and labours were terminated by his death, January 11th, 1830, and his remains were laid in a vault in the chapel yard. His biographer says :—

Before the ceremony of interment the body was borne into the chapel by eight members of his congregation, and was laid on a bier in front of the pulpit and communion table. The chapel was crowded to excess, upwards of 2,000 persons being present, including the whole of his congregation.³

¹ Vide ante p. 123.

² Page 140.

³ “*Evangelical Magazine*,” for 1830, p. 140.

The funeral oration was delivered by Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool ; the sermon on the Sunday, January 24th, by Dr. McAll, of Mosley Street, and Dr. Jabez Bunting, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, conducted the other part of the service. The following, from the *Manchester Times*, for January 16th, will appropriately conclude the notice of this great and gifted man :—

Last Sunday evening he was not considered in immediate danger, nor were there, up to the last moment, those acute sufferings, or those alterations of countenance and posture, which are the usual precursors of death. To one who watched by his bedside the precise moment was unknown. Not only is an irreparable loss sustained by his afflicted widow and now destitute church, but by all the religious interests of the town ; indeed, so extensive and salutary was the influence of this revered and excellent minister that his death is regarded rather as a general than as a private or individual loss. Endued with a singularly masculine understanding, and with a disposition not less mild and charitable, Mr. Roby assiduously discharged the duties of his sacred office, and prosecuted, with pre-eminent success, a career of usefulness, limited only by the necessary conditions of our being. Few that occupy stations so active and public incur so little censure as fell to his lot ; and, perhaps, no one, of the present day, has furnished a more worthy example of every thing that gives energy to religious character, and secures respect for the ministers of Christ. Mr. Roby was in the 64th year of his age. His ministry, which was commenced in the county of Worcester, and was then, for seven years, continued at Wigan (his birthplace), was unusually honoured and successful. It was in the year 1795 that he became pastor of the congregation with which he was ever since connected. It is a pleasing circumstance that he was able to preach a sermon to the young on the evening of the first Sabbath in this year, being the 35th anniversary of that interesting service.

His widow, Sarah Roby, followed him to the grave five years afterwards, and in her will left £50, “the interest of which was to be handed over to the deacons of the church for the purpose of keeping in repair the monument and mural tablet of her late husband.” The Rev. Richard Fletcher, from Darwen, began his pastorate as successor to Mr. Roby, on June 19th, 1831.¹ The foundation-stone of the Roby Schools was laid on July 6th, 1844, by Samuel Fletcher, Esq., and on the 25th of January following they were

¹ Vide “Lancashire Nonconformity,” vol. ii.

formally opened by a tea meeting. After a ministry of twenty-two years, which is still gratefully remembered by the elder people, Mr. Fletcher resigned on August 10th, 1853, and along with the Rev. J. L. Poore, went to Australia in connection with the Colonial Missionary Society.

The story of his unexpected death on the eve of a projected visit to England is thus related :—

All the necessary arrangements were made for Mr. Fletcher's departure; the passage was taken, the sermon to his flock preached, when he was overtaken by an illness which baffled the skill of his medical friends, and instead of taking the journey to England he "fell asleep in Jesus," and went to the "Father's house." The event took place on the evening of Sunday, December 15th, the very day which spread the shadow of death over England by the removal of the Prince Consort from our midst.¹

The Congregational College at Melbourne, of which the Rev. A. Gosman is the honoured principal, is a memorial of him; for to his "untiring exertions" it mainly owes its existence. The Rev. Patrick Thomson, M.A., from Chatham, and who had formerly been a few years at Liverpool, followed Mr. Fletcher, commencing his labours July 9th, 1854. An interesting event, the jubilee of the opening of Grosvenor Street Chapel, was celebrated in December, 1856. On Wednesday evening, December 3rd, there was a large meeting of ministers of the district, and members of the church and congregation, over which the pastor presided. Mr. Samuel Fletcher had generously promised £1,000, "on condition that a sufficient sum was raised to purchase the chief or ground rent." This was done during the course of the year. On the following Friday evening, December 5th, there was a tea meeting of old scholars and teachers, when some 450 persons were present. Mr. Thomson resigned June 19th, 1865,² and was followed in the ensuing February by the Rev. R. W. McAll. He was educated at Lancashire College, and had previously laboured at Sunderland and Leicester. His Manchester charge he resigned September 13th, 1867, and after brief ministries at Birmingham, and Haldleigh, in Suffolk, he went to Paris, and originated what is known as "The McAll Mission in France." Dr. McAll (for such he now is) is still

¹ "Memoir of the Rev. John Legg Poore," by John Corbin, p. 304.

² Vide "Lancashire Nonconformity," vol. vi.

the director and president of this work, which ranks amongst the most important religious movements of this century. The present minister, the Rev. Thomas Willis, educated at Airedale, and whose previous sphere of labour was Pontefract, succeeded Mr. McAll on January 3rd, 1869, and consequently has entered upon the 25th year of his pastorate here. Situated as the church is in the heart of the city, and hemmed in by warehouses, it has felt in a pre-eminent degree the driftings of the population towards the suburbs, though it may still be found among the first dozen Congregational churches of the county for the largeness of its contributions to the cause of Home and Foreign Missions; and its present state of vigour and health is valuable testimony to the success of Mr. Willis's ministry. Like his predecessor, Mr. Roby, he has also devoted himself to the larger interests of Congregationalism, having for many years discharged the duties along with the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, of General Secretary of the Lancashire Congregational Union. In 1883 he filled the Presidential Chair of the Union, and his address as such to the delegates and ministers assembled at Southport will long be remembered. Worthy names—and not a few—are associated with this church, concerning which a book of no mean size might be written. James Pridie was admitted a member in 1811, with whom we shall meet later as minister of the New Windsor Congregational Church; Thomas Steele, the first superintendent of the school, admitted to fellowship in September, 1807; Robert Moffat, a member in 1816, who, as Dr. Moffat, the great African missionary, will be remembered with grateful love so long as Christian missions exist; Robert Hampson, John Ince, and Samuel Wilson, who gave themselves to missionary work in 1816; Samuel Fletcher, chosen to the office of deacon in 1818, whose munificence has been referred to in the foregoing sketch; Thomas Hughes, sent a student to Hoxton in 1821; Elijah Armitage, who, with his wife and family, went in the same year to the South Seas "to evangelise the natives and instruct them in certain branches of the cotton manufacture;" John Cummins¹ and James

¹ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity." Mr. Cummins, after returning from Madagascar, exercised his ministry for some time at Smallbridge, and Blackpool.

Cameron, sent out in 1826, as missionary artisans to Madagascar; William Armitage, elected a deacon in November, 1851, the genial Treasurer for many years of the Lancashire Congregational Union, and whose death on January 11th, 1893, was a severe loss to all our denominational institutions; Joseph Shillito, dismissed in 1856 as pastor of Ebenezer Chapel, Dewsbury; R. G. Hartley, M.A., dismissed in March, 1859, to the Greenfield Congregational Church, Bradford, of which he had become pastor; Jonathan Lees, whose work in China is everywhere spoken of, ordained and designated as a missionary, September 10th, 1861; and Thomas Sheldon, ordained pastor of Westhoughton Congregational Church, April 19th, 1867. These names are by no means exhaustive, but they are sufficient to show how rich the church is in this direction; whilst we shall see, as we come to sketch the history of the other Congregational Churches in Manchester and Salford, that it has repeatedly sent large contingents of members to help in their origination.

IV.—MOSLEY STREET (NOW CAVENDISH STREET) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

DISAGREEMENT with their minister, the Rev. David Bradberry, led to a considerable secession of members from Cannon Street Church in 1788, and the formation of the second Congregational church in Manchester. The Ruling Eldership question, which, as previously indicated,¹ had assumed larger and more definite meanings in the days of Priestley than those of Warhurst, appears to have been mainly responsible for this secession. Amongst other things, it was charged against Mr. Bradberry that his endeavour was to "remove the elders from their office, and break up that form of government under which they had been admitted as members;" and it was quite clear that the charge was not groundless. Mr. Bradberry seems to have had little sympathy with the semi-Presbyterianism of some members of his congregation, and did not

¹ Vide ante p. 116.

hesitate to hint that the church had been "misguided" in the creation of the office of elder. After much "unhappy controversy," therefore, a division took place, "accompanied by no small degree of acrimonious feeling." The dissentient church officers were:—John Spear, John Hope,¹ A. Houghton, Arthur Clegg, John Steward, James Fisher, elders; and Henry Hope, James Dinwiddie, and John Mitchell, deacons. The deacons who remained loyal to the minister were John Joule, John Leigh, and Thomas Livesey. The seceding persons held worship for a short time in a warehouse in St. Andrew's Lane, near Church Street, where they obtained the "assistance of several popular ministers."² In 1788 they built the chapel in Mosley Street, "certainly a noble undertaking for the time, so far as respected the building itself, although constructed without any regard to the science of acoustics." "Oddly enough," says Dr. Mackennal, "the seceders, in founding Mosley Street Church, although they called a Scotch Presbyterian minister to the pastorate, left the appointment of ruling elders optional in the written constitution of their church, and, in fact, did not introduce into the church the officer for whose sake they had seceded."³ The minister in question was the Rev. Thomas Kennedy, M.A., who had been educated at Edinburgh, and had served for some time as a minister of the Church of Scotland. He is described as "a solid and able preacher, but not popular in his manner."⁴ Receiving a presentation to a church in his native country he returned thither, after having laboured in Manchester about six years. His successor was the Rev. Joseph Smith, who had received no collegiate training, but who came to Manchester from Coventry, where he had been engaged in business. His ordination over the church at Mosley Street took place in September, 1798, of which the following account has been preserved:—

¹ In the Mosley Street Church Book is the following:—"August 29th, 1822, died John Hope, Deacon, aged 78, he had held that office more than 50 years."

² MS. account of Mosley Street Independent Chapel, kindly lent by Mrs. Macfadyen.

³ "Life of Dr. Macfadyen," p. 105.

⁴ MS. history of Mosley Street Independent Chapel.

Wednesday, September 12, 1798, the Rev. Joseph Smith was ordained (by imposition of hands) to the pastoral charge of the Independent Church, Mosley-street, Manchester. Mr. Sowden, of Sowerby, gave out the hymns; Mr. Roby, of Manchester, began with prayer and reading suitable scriptures; the Rev. Mr. Edwards, of Wem, explained the nature of a gospel church, and received the confession of faith; Mr. Medley, of Liverpool, prayed the ordination prayer; Mr. Evans, of Coventry, gave the charge from 2 Tim. iv., 1, 2; Mr. Burder, of Coventry, preached to the people from Eph. iii., 21; and Mr. Anglezark, of Stockport, concluded with prayer."¹

Mr. Smith was exceedingly popular as a preacher, and drew together large congregations, but "the rupture of several blood vessels, which repeatedly threatened his dissolution," led to his resignation in January, 1801.² Mention has already been made of the bitter feeling existing between the two churches for some time after the secession, which Mr. Roby, on his settlement in Manchester, set himself earnestly to remove; and the affliction of Mr. Smith gave him the opportunity of brotherly help, of which he gladly availed himself. Dr. Waddington says:—

When the new minister of Mosley Street was seized with hemorrhage from the lungs, and was unable to go through with the service, the intelligence was conveyed to Cannon Street before the communicants had sat down at the Lord's Table. Mr. Roby took his people with him to Mosley Street Chapel, and administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper at the same time. Both the churches, as well as the ministers, were deeply affected by the incident.³

Mr. Smith remained in Manchester for some time after his retirement from the ministry, and having married a lady with property he engaged in business as a cotton merchant with considerable success. Subsequently he removed to Leamington. The Rev. Samuel Bradley was his successor, being recognised as such on November 11th, 1801. The Rev. John Johnson, of Manchester, read the Scriptures and offered the introductory prayer on the occasion; the Rev. Wm. Roby preached on "the invaluable worth of the gospel, concluding with an address to the newly-elected pastor;" the Rev. E. Parsons, of Leeds, "exhibited the

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1798, p. 478.

² Ibid for 1802, p. 38.

³ "Congregational History," vol. iv., p. 56.

superior excellence of the gospel dispensation ;” and the Rev. Joseph Smith, “late pastor, concluded with a very affecting prayer, in which he was frequently interrupted by tears.”¹ In 1819 an enlargement of the chapel became necessary, owing to the success of Mr. Bradley’s ministry, which was continued until June, 1826, when he resigned. He then went to reside for a short time in Paris, but afterwards returned to Manchester, “joined himself to a small church in Hulme,” and subsequently became pastor of the Cannon Street Church, in succession to the Rev. John Whitridge.² Mr. Bradley was one of the founders of the Lancashire County Union, which took definite shape at a meeting held in the vestry of his chapel, September 23rd, 1806. The church was fortunate in securing as successor to Mr. Bradley the Rev. R. S. McAll, LL.D., who was the son of the Rev. Robert McAll, an eminent minister in the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion, and was born at Plymouth, August 4th, 1792. At the early age of fourteen he was placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Small, “the respected tutor of the Academy at Axminster,” and subsequently entered Hoxton Academy. His residence here was brief, “owing to circumstances not in the least degree discreditable to himself,”³ and subsequently he repaired to Edinburgh University, where he “devoted himself chiefly to the study of medicine.” It was whilst he was there that he formed the acquaintance of the Rev. Peter Brotherton, of Dysart, through whom mainly he became fixed in his original purpose of giving himself to the Christian ministry. On the completion of his University career he settled at Macclesfield, where for about twelve years he laboured with marked success, and on the first Sunday in January, 1827, he entered upon his duties as pastor of the Mosley Street Church. In 1835, the school-room being found inconvenient, and being needed for other purposes, “serious thoughts were entertained as to the propriety of selling the chapel and building a more convenient place of worship.” Meetings were held, and committees formed, but friction arose, and diffi-

¹ “Evangelical Magazine” for 1802, p. 38.

² Vide ante p. 124.

³ “Evangelical Magazine” for 1839, p. 2.

culties of all kinds were raised by opponents of the scheme. A period of trade depression also set in, so that there was no prospect of "selling the chapel but to a great disadvantage." Some of the trustees, too, objected; and "the Doctor's health, which for some time had been declining, now assumed a still more alarming aspect." His biographer says:—

His daughter appeared far gone in a state of debility. They removed to Southport, but no advantage was secured by this expedient. They were really worse, and lest Miss McAll should die from home, they returned to their residence in Lime Grove, Chorlton-upon-Medlock, where she expired on the 6th of July [1838]. Hoping that he might yet recover, immediately upon this bereavement he was taken to the house of Mr. J. K. Heron, Swinton Park, where he died on the 27th of the same month.¹

He was interred in the Rusholme Road Cemetery, and the "funeral procession, containing persons of various denominations," is said to have been "perhaps the largest that had ever been seen in the town of Manchester." The "funeral services" occasioned by his death, and afterwards published, consisted of an address by the Rev. J. Ely, of Leeds; an oration by the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham; and a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool. Dr. McAll was one of those great pulpit orators of whom Manchester has happily had not a few, and by his "extraordinary eloquence" he succeeded in holding together a large congregation. Some volumes of his sermons have been published, but beautiful as they appear on paper, they give no idea of the powers of the man, who is still a hallowed memory to many Manchester people. In the Cavendish Street Chapel is a marble tablet thus inscribed:—

Sacred to the Memory of

The Rev. ROBERT STEVENS McALL, LL.D.,

who for the period of twelve years sustained the Pastoral office in this Place, consecrating talents of the highest order, with rich and varied stores of Erudition to the Glory of God, and the Service of the Church. He lived in the affection of his people, and the admiration of the Public, and died in the midst of his

Usefulness July 27, 1838,

In the 46th year of his age.

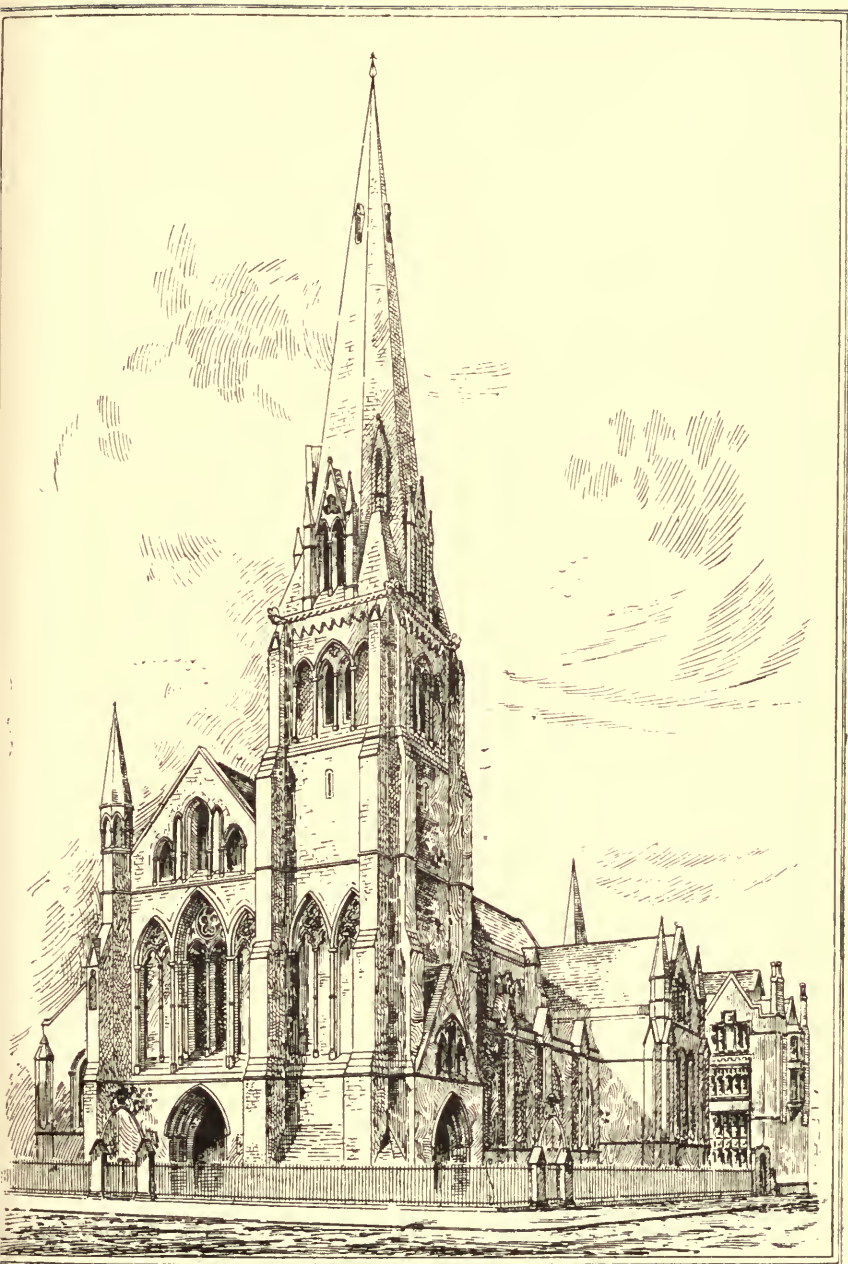
¹ MS. history of Mosley Street Independent Chapel.

The choice of a successor was therefore no easy matter, and the following passage, showing how Dr. Halley's appearance upon the scene at the Christmas of 1838 was received, will interest the reader :—

Although very different in all respects from Dr. McAll as a preacher, he seemed to attract the particular attention of a considerable number of the members, especially of the deacons. Hence he was requested to repeat his visit, which, having done, a Church meeting was announced for the purpose, in accordance with the trust deed, of choosing a pastor. The meeting was held on the 28th day of February. Dr. Halley was proposed with no small quantity of panegyric. It had been understood that the number of members was from 400 to 500. On this occasion, however, 2 were neuter, 12 voted against him, and 130 for him. Besides this, it was certainly the case that many who voted for him had doubts upon their minds as to his keeping together a congregation, which Dr. McAll, by his extraordinary eloquence, had collected from all parts of the town and neighbourhood.¹

Dr. Halley was born at Blackheath, August 13th, 1796, his father being a nurseryman in that village. He received his ministerial training at Homerton College, and had for his first pastorate St. Neots, in Huntingdonshire, where he was ordained in 1822. In 1826, on the opening of Highbury College, he was chosen as resident Classical Tutor, a post which he filled with credit until his removal to Manchester. It was during this period that he first appeared as an author, and obtained his degree of D.D. from Princetown College, New Jersey, in recognition of his services in the world of literature. The call to succeed Dr. McAll at Mosley Street was, "after much anxious consideration," accepted, and he entered upon his labours in July, 1839. The choice of the church so hesitatingly made proved to be a wise one, and Dr. Halley soon showed himself equal to sustaining the best traditions of the Mosley Street pulpit. The agitation for a more convenient house of worship was recommenced, and "the 22nd of June, 1848, saw the new chapel opened, and the occasion was a memorable one in the annals of Manchester Nonconformity, both from the fact that the buildings were far superior to any previously erected by the Dissenting congregation of Manchester (if

¹ MS. history of Mosley Street Independent Chapel.



CAVENDISH STREET CHAPEL.

not in England), and from the brilliant assemblage who took part in the opening services. Among the best known of these were Dr. Harris, Samuel Martin, of Westminster, Dr. Vaughan, Dr. Leif-child, Dr. Raffles, James Parsons, and the pastor, Dr. Halley."¹ The buildings, which included school and chapel, together with a chapel-keeper's house, cost about £25,000, and the sitting accommodation of the chapel is for 1,700 persons, being the largest Congregational Chapel in the county with the exception of Great George Street, Liverpool. The style of architecture is "Early English, verging into the decorated," and the tower and spire at the South West corner are 170 feet high.²

In 1855 Dr. Halley filled the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and two years after that accepted an invitation to the Principalship of New College, London, rendered vacant by the death of Dr. Harris. At this post he remained until 1872, when he retired. He preached his last sermon from the pulpit of his son's church at Arundel, June 25th, 1876, and on Friday midnight, August 18th, he "passed away without disease and without pain," being then a little over eighty years of age. His remains were laid in the Abney Cemetery by his beloved friends, the Revs. Dr. Newth, J. Godwin, and Dr. Aveling. On Sunday, August 27th, funeral sermons were preached at Clapton Park Chapel, by Dr. Aveling, and at New College Chapel by the Rev. (now Dr.) Ll. D. Bevan. The preachers had been selected by Dr. Halley himself to represent the one, his old Highbury students, the other his New College students. Dr. Halley was a public man, and during his residence in Manchester his voice was often heard in support of every form of "civil and religious liberty." He was also a very considerable writer, his best known works being "The Sacraments," which forms part of the "Congregational Lecture" series, and his "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," by far the most interesting of the county Congregational histories yet published. His son, the Rev. Robert Halley, M.A., died at Arundel in 1886, aged fifty-eight years, and another son, the Rev. J. J. Halley, is the Secretary of the Congre-

¹ "Bazaar Handbook," published in 1890.

² "Congregational Year Book" for 1849, p. 211.

gational Union and Mission of Victoria. An attempt was made to secure the Rev. R. W. Dale, M.A., as Dr. Halley's successor at Manchester, but he decided to remain at Birmingham, and an invitation was next presented to the Rev. Joseph Parker, of Banbury. At first the call was declined, he having "resolved to stay in Banbury till the church there had paid off its debt of £650. At the same time there was a debt of £234 at Cavendish Street. The reply received from Banbury supplied all the stimulus needed to rouse the Manchester men to make an effort. The effort was swift and vigorous, and so successful that in a week or two both debts had ceased to be, and in exactly one month after the issue of the first invitation, Rev. Joseph Parker accepted the call to the pulpit of Cavendish Chapel."¹

This was in June, 1858, and after an eleven years' ministry of unbroken success he removed to the old Poultry Chapel, London, since superseded by the renowned City Temple. For a quarter of a century and more Dr. Parker has been one of the most prominent figures, not merely in the Congregational, but in the whole religious, world. "It would require," says one, "an able writer and a large space to do the barest possible justice to Dr. Parker; to his eloquence as a minister of the Gospel and an advocate of our Nonconformist principles; to the charm of his manner with the timid and the young; to his championship of all good causes that are in peril or need; to his sarcastic or indignant declamation against every form of iniquity. His pen has been as busy as his tongue, and has poured forth a constant succession of sermons, novels, prayers, expositions, and personal reminiscences."² Sunday and week-day multitudes still crowd into the City Temple to hear his fresh and vivid expositions of Bible truth, whilst his contributions to literature have won for him hosts of admirers. His "People's Bible," the great literary work of his life, which is rapidly nearing completion, has proved an unspeakable boon to many preachers and Bible students in general. It is no small honour for Manchester that such names as McAll, Halley, and Parker have been so closely associated with the history of its religious life.

¹ "Bazaar Handbook."

² Ibid.

The Rev. A. J. Bray, a student from Cheshunt College, began his labours at Cavendish in 1871, and in September, 1876, he resigned, having accepted the charge of Zion Church, Montreal. His successor was the Rev. Edwin Paxton Hood, who, though having had no collegiate training, was an accomplished scholar. His first pastorate was in the little village of North Nibley, whence he removed to Offord Road, London, and subsequently to Brighton. After a brief ministry at this place he returned to his old charge at Offord Road, whence he was invited to Manchester in June, 1877. Friction arose between himself and some members of his congregation, which led to his resignation in 1880, but for twelve months longer he continued to preach in Manchester to large congregations, which assembled in Hulme Town Hall. His last pastorate was Falcon Square, London, where he died June 12th, 1885, aged sixty-four years. Mr. Hood was a very voluminous writer, and his death meant the removal of a singularly rich and beautiful life from the world. In July, 1881, the Rev. W. J. Woods, B.A., who had been educated at New College, and had laboured some seven years at Leamington, accepted the unanimous call of the church. Much to the regret of his people he resigned in 1887, and removed to Clapton Park, London. He is now the Secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, being appointed successor to Dr. Hannay a little over twelve months ago. The Rev. G. S. Reaney, from Stepney, London, and formerly of Warrington, followed in January, 1888. He resigned in April, 1892, and entered the Established Church.¹ The present minister is the Rev. J. W. Holdsworth, a student from the Yorkshire United Independent College, who entered upon duty June 26th, 1892. Amongst the numerous institutions of the church is a Ragged School, founded in October, 1865, "for the purpose of imparting religious instruction to those children in the neighbourhood, who through poverty or other causes held themselves aloof from the afternoon school." There is an average attendance on Sunday evenings in the large schoolroom of about 250. There is also the "Cavendish Mission," the first service in

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

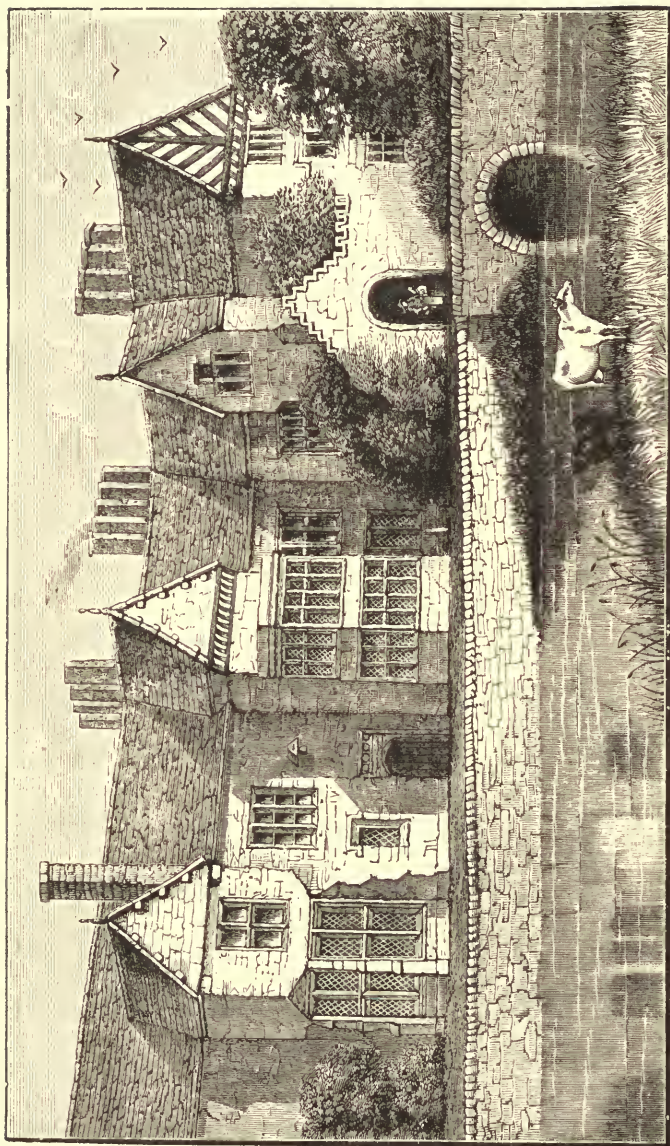
connection with which was held October 7th, 1886, in a cottage in a court off Jenkinson Street. The house soon proved too small, and larger premises were opened on May 13th, 1887, in Higher Ormond Street, where the work is still carried on. Mr. Holdsworth is worthily and courageously seeking to restore to Cavendish Street Chapel some of its ancient glory. The same influences, which led to the removal of the church from Mosley Street to Cavendish Street over forty years ago, are still operating vigorously, and all loyal friends of Manchester Congregationalism will wish for the pastor and his people every success in their uphill work.

V.—PLATT CHAPEL.

THE township of Rusholme is now a densely populated ward on the south-east side of the great city from which it was formerly distant some two or three miles. Its name is significant, and gives some idea of the original character of the country, being derived from the "well-known aquatic plant the *Rush*, the latter syllable *holme* signifying, in the Anglo-Saxon, a flat area of damp ground by a river side."¹ The township formerly consisted of several hamlets, in two of which we have a special interest, viz., Birch and Platt. Birch Chapel was erected by members of the Birch family²

¹ Booker's "History of Birch Chapel" (Chetham Society Series, vol. xlvii.), p. 1. To this work I am indebted for much of what follows.

² The Birch family, resident in the hamlet of Birch from at least the beginning of the 14th century, figured very prominently in the Great Civil War of the 17th century. Its most noteworthy representative was Colonel Thomas Birch, a fiery Independent, and an ardent supporter of Cromwell. He was the leader of the Parliamentary forces in the sieges of Preston, Liverpool, and Lancaster, and subsequently became the governor of Liverpool. A branch of this family settled at Ardwick, one of whom, Samuel Birch, purchased Ordsall Hall and estate on its being sold by the Radcliffe family, about the time of the Restoration. The Rev. Henry Newcome was an intimate friend of Mr. Samuel Birch, and in his diary, under date April 3rd, 1663, he tells about paying a visit to the Hall in company with "Old Captain Birch," and seeing the house and library ("Newcome's Diary," p. 174).



ORDSALL HALL.

during the reign of Elizabeth, some time before 1573; and, like Gorton, Newton, and Blackley, was one of the chapels-of-ease to the Manchester Collegiate Church. The first minister, whose name has been preserved, was the Rev. Richard Lingard, curate in 1622, and in 1623 the Rev. Thomas Norman, who had previously officiated at Gorton, was labouring here.¹

Passing over one or two other names of little interest we come to that of the Rev. John Wigan, who also had been at Gorton, leaving in 1646 for Birch. He was of the Independent way of thinking, and in his efforts to "set up Congregationalism" at Birch met with considerably more success than he did in his previous sphere. He resigned soon after the visit of the Parliamentary Commissioners in 1650.² Of his children, Elizabeth married Mr. Daniel Dunbaven, of Warrington, February 19th, 1656, and Lydia the Rev. William Morris, of Manchester, June 10th, 1658. The Rev. Robert Birch was minister here in July, 1659. He was doubtless a member of the family who had built the chapel, and, refusing to conform, was silenced in 1662 by the Act of Uniformity, after which he "commenced physician and surgeon."³ He died in 1693, and in his will is described as of "Grindlowe, within the township of Chorlton, alias Chorlton roe, in the county of Lancaster." He bequeathed his property to his "loving wife" Mary, and to his "three daughters, Margaret, Mary, and Martha." The years which followed the silencing of Mr. Birch constitute the period during which Nonconformity was assailed by all the forces which the law could command, and the most retired places did not escape the keen eye of the persecutor. Of this period but little is known, and so the name of the immediate successor of Mr. Birch is doubtful. Adam Martindale says that after his ejection from Rostherne, in 1662, he "preached publicly in two neighbour Chapells, Gorton and Birch,"⁴ but with what measure of regularity he does not state. Hunter gives an interesting account of a Conventicle held at Birch Hall in 1666:—

Colonel Birch, a Parliamentary Officer, permitted two wandering ministers

¹ Vide ante p. 53.

² Vide ante p. 51.

³ Calamy's "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 353.

⁴ "Life of Adam Martindale" (Chetham Society Series, Vol. iv., p. 193).

from Germany to preach at Birch-hall, on Sunday, the 18th of November, 1666. They were engaged from nine to three, speaking very fluently, denouncing all manner of love to England, and exhorting people to fly and take refuge in Germany. They sang two German hymns with well-tuned voices, the purport of one of which, when sung at the house of an old Commonwealth officer, beginning—

“Hark, how the trumpet sounds,”

might well excite some alarm in the minds of the neighbouring Royalists. The magistrates took the opportunity of putting the Conventicle Act in force against Colonel Birch and several persons who were present at this meeting, amongst whom was the wife of Ralph Worsley, a gentleman of Rusholm, ancestor of the Worsleys of Platt, friends of the Nonconformists.¹

In 1672, the year of the Indulgence Act, the Rev. Henry Finch was minister here. He was born in the parish of Standish, and, after acquiring “considerable exactness” in Latin and Greek at Wigan and Standish Schools, proceeded to the University, “where he made good use of his time, and by diligent study improv’d his fine natural parts so, that he return’d to his native Countrey, well furnished with substantial learning, for the work of the ministry.”² For some time he preached in the Fylde; and in July, 1654, was called to be vicar of Walton-on-the-Hill, near Liverpool,³ having associated with him in the work the Rev. Robert Eaton. Ejected in 1662, he retired to Warrington, where some of his wife’s relations lived, and “kept many private Fasts in the neighbourhood, praying and waiting for an opportunity to fulfil his ministry, in a more publick and extensive way.”⁴ Driven from Warrington by

¹ “Life of Oliver Heywood,” p. 188.

² Calamy’s “Account of the Ejected or Silenced Ministers” (1713 Edition), vol. ii., p. 404.

³ In previous volumes of this work I have gone upon the assumption that Mr. Finch was the minister of Walton, near Preston. Both Calamy and Dr. Halley leave the point undetermined, but from the Parish Register of Walton-on-the-Hill it appears that Mr. Finch succeeded the Rev. Neville Kaye as vicar there on July 30th, 1654.—(Vide vol. vi. of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”)

⁴ Calamy’s “Account,” &c., vol. ii., p. 405. Roger Lowe, in his diary under date June 14th, 1664, tells about going to Warrington to “Mr. Finches to gett them come to a funerall.” “I called at Winwicke,” says he, “and bespoke bread and drinke; and when I came to the farmost Mrs. Finch would not let me goe till the next morninge for it was late, so I stayd, and att day I arose and went to sadle horse, and so came home.”—(“The Diary of Roger Lowe, of Ashton-in-Makerfield.” *Chronicle* Office, Leigh.)

the Corporation Act of 1665 he was led to Manchester, where he "ordinarily joyn'd in publick worship with the Established Church till the liberty in 1672, when he renew'd his beloved work of preaching publicly at *Birch-Chapel* with great diligence and cheerfullness."¹ He continued to serve the chapel until 1697, when it was taken from him by George Birch, Esq., who had succeeded to the Birch estate, and who had no sympathy with the Nonconformity of his fathers. In 1699 Mr. Birch nominated the Rev. Samuel Taylor, M.A., of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, "to serve at my domestick chappell of Birch,"² and at this point we must leave the history of Birch Chapel, because here the history of its Nonconformity ends.

The second of those hamlets which formerly made up the township of Rusholme, and in which we are especially interested, is Platt, "a word which, in the Anglo-Saxon language, denotes a place or station, or more precisely a sheepfold."³ Here, during the 17th century, resided the Worsley family, equal in importance to the Birch family, and as decidedly Nonconformist. If the one gave Colonel Thomas Birch to Cromwell, the other gave him Major-General Worsley, a man of devout religious feeling, of earnest prayer, and deep trust in God. His death on June 12th, 1656, at the early age of thirty-five, was felt by no one more keenly than by the Protector himself, whose "great and rising favourite" he was said to be. His son, Ralph Worsley, inherited the religious principles of his father and grandfather, and "after the Restoration he continued the faithful friend and protector of the Nonconformist interest at Rusholme through all the vicissitudes of fortune to which it was subjected."⁴ When, therefore, Mr. Finch was made to retire from Birch Chapel, Ralph Worsley, amongst others, licensed his house for worship, and provision was made for Mr. Finch to the extent of £16 per year, towards which fifty individuals contributed. On the 30th of May, 1699, a meeting of those inhabitants who wished a continuance of

¹ Vide ante p. 85, for Mr. Finch's license to preach.

² Booker's "History of Birch Chapel," p. 151.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴ Halley's "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. ii., p. 37.



BIRCH CHAPEL.

Mr. Finch's services was convened, when the following resolutions were adopted :—

1. Wee, whose names are hereunto subscribed, doe declare our earnest and hearty desire that there may be a Building erected for the Worship of God for the benefitt and convenience of that congregation w^{ch} now attends upon the ministry of Mr. ffinche.

2. Wee doe promise and declare that wee will duely attend the worshipp of God in such place when erected.

3. further, wee doe promise to contribute to the maintenance of such Dissenting minister or ministers as shall be unanimously elected to officiate in the said place.¹

Mr. Ralph Worsley, amongst others, signed the document containing these resolutions, and gave for the proposed chapel "a site, the south-east corner of a close called the Blake Flatt, in extent about twenty roods."

The following is a list of contributions to the building fund :—

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Finch	20	0	0
Mr. Raphe Worsley...	10	0	0
Mr. Edge, of Warrington	6	0	0
Richard Whittaker	5	0	0
Mr. Thomas Butterworth	1	10	0
Mr. Alexander Boardman	1	10	0
Mr. Birche, Minister ²	1	0	0
Adam Barlow... ..	1	0	0
Obadiah Hulme	1	0	0
Mr. Charles Worsley	1	0	0
Mrs. Okell	1	0	0
Francis Wood	1	0	0
Mr. Siddall	1	0	0
Mad. Gill	1	0	0
Mrs. Loyd	0	10	0

It is recorded that 39,008 bricks were used in its erection, and the chief items of disbursement were as follows :—

¹ Booker's "History of Birch Chapel," p. 161.

² Dr. Halley ("Lancashire Puritanism," vol. ii., p. 305) says this was Mr. Robert Birch, the ejected minister. But he had been dead several years before a new chapel was thought about. I imagine this was the Rev. Eliezer Birch, afterwards minister at Cross Street (vide ante p. 94).

	£	s.	d.
ffor Brickses	19	10	0
ffor 56 Loads of Lime at 18d. per load	4	4	0
Peter Ryland, Bricksetter	4	2	6
Randle Thorneley, &c., ffor Slate	4	15	6
ffor Timber	10	0	0
Jeremiah Kirsley for Slateinge and Morse	2	13	8
ffor Boordes for Doores and Weatheringe and for 50 yards of sparrs at 3d. per yard	2	8	2
Three Loades of fflaggs and carriage	1	7	6
ffor meate, drink, ale, pipes and tobaccer att y ^e Rearinge, being y ^e sixth day of October	0	19	0
ffor Glass six score and foure foote at 4½d. y ^e foot	2	6	6
The Smith for Bandes for Doores w th Barres and Bolts and window rods	1	12	10
ffor Recordinge our Chappell	0	1	6
ffor the Pulpitt Quishion	1	3	3
John Odcroft's Bill for y ^e Pulpitt, Sounder, seates, wainscott, &c.	18	7	11

The total amount expended was £95, and the building was opened for worship towards the end of 1700, the Rev. James Grimshaw officiating on the occasion and receiving five shillings for his service. Mr. Finch did not long survive the erection of the chapel, for he died in 1704, aged seventy-one years, and was buried on the 16th of November in that year.¹ Calamy says:—

He was a great Blessing and Help to the Younger Ministers, who lov'd and honour'd him as a Father; and his Behaviour to them was full of Condescension and Tenderness. His Preaching was clear and methodical, and was adapted to convince the mind and to move the Passions. He liv'd according to his Profession, a peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty.²

The Rev. Robert Hesketh was the next minister. He was educated at Rathmell Academy by the Rev. Richard Frankland, entering as a student there in 1692, and appeared before the Lancashire ministers at Bolton as a candidate for the ministry on April 14th, 1696. His first charge was probably Bispham, near

¹ The reader is referred to vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for information about members of the Finch family.

² "Account of the Silenced and Ejected Ministers" (1713), vol. ii., pp. 406-407.

Blackpool.¹ He settled at Platt Chapel about 1704, and remained until 1712. The Rev. John Whitaker was his successor. He was ordained at Knutsford, August 3rd, 1714, and for his thesis advocated the affirmative of the question, "An infantes fidelium sint baptizandi?" He was connected, I imagine, with the Rev. Thomas Whitaker, M.A., of Leeds. His father, Richard Whitaker, was buried at Platt Chapel, October 22nd, 1723, and his mother at the same place, March 1st, 1726. Mr. Whitaker's labours here terminated with his death in 1752. The Rev. Robert Andrews followed. He belonged to the Andrews family of Rivington and Little Lever, being born at the latter place June 29th, 1723. He was educated for the ministry by Dr. Rotheram, at Kendal, and took as his first charge Platt Chapel, shortly after the death of Mr. Whitaker. His stay was brief, not exceeding more than three years, when he removed to Bridgnorth, Salop, where he died about 1766. He is described as "a man of considerable talents and learning." In 1757 he published "Eidyllia," a set of poems in blank verse, to which he prefixed a violent attack upon rhyme. He wrote also "Animadversions on Dr. Brown's Essays on the Characteristics," and a criticism on the sermons of his friend, the Rev. John Holland. Just previous to his death he published from Baskerville's Press an English blank verse translation of the works of Virgil on the strange plan of confining the sense of every line of the original to a line of English verse. His writings, especially his attack on rhyme, are said to betray "marks of a very unsettled imagination, which afterwards increased so much as to render occasional confinement necessary. In this state it is believed he died."² The Rev. John Houghton followed. He was a native of Liverpool, was born in 1730, and entered Dr. Doddridge's Academy, at Northampton, in 1747. Not having completed his education at the time of Doddridge's death, he proceeded to Glasgow University. His first settlement was at Platt Chapel, but the date is uncertain. In 1755 he married Mary

¹ Booker ("History of Birch Chapel," p. 168) confuses him with his son, the Rev. Robert Hesketh, M.A., who was minister of a congregation at Carnforth, near Lancaster. Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for full information about the Hesketh family.

² "Monthly Repository" for 1810, p. 426.

Pendlebury, the granddaughter of the Rev. Henry Pendlebury, M.A., whose mother was Mary, second daughter of Ralph Worsley, of Platt. Mr. Houghton removed to Hyde, in Cheshire, about 1758, and subsequently to Nantwich, Elland, and Wem. Previous to leaving Hyde it is said :—

He had much mental anxiety, owing to his unwillingness to distress the feelings of the good people by mentioning it to them. At last he summoned courage and said to one of his hearers, "Jonathan, I am sorry to tell you that I am leaving you." The reply was, "Well, sir, then I reckon we must get another." Calling afterwards on another of his hearers, he said, "If I thought all the congregation were as indifferent about me as Jonathan Butterworth, I would not preach at Hyde another Sunday."¹

On leaving Wem he withdrew from the ministry, and went to reside with his son, the Rev. Pendlebury Houghton, who was minister of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich, where he opened a school. He died there in April, 1800.²

The Rev. Richard Meanley succeeded Mr. Houghton at Platt Chapel in 1758. He was educated by Dr. Rotheram at Kendal, and first settled at Nantwich. He laboured at Platt Chapel until his death in 1794. His son was the Rev. Astley Meanley, some time minister at Prescott.³ In the graveyard of the chapel is Mr. Meanley's tombstone, thus inscribed :—

Interred Here
The Rev^d. RICHARD MEANLEY,
Of Platt, who died Sept^r. 22^d. 1794,
Aged 77 years.
Also MARY, his Wife, who died
March 5, 1772, aged 52 years.
Also MARY, their Daughter,
Who died January 28th, 1813,
Aged 66 years.
Also ELLEN, their Daughter,
Who died February 3rd, 1813,
Aged 62 years.

¹ "Christian Reformer" for 1848, p. 476, note.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for information about the Pendlebury family.

³ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

During the next three years the chapel was supplied by students, and in 1797 the Rev. George Checkley became the minister. He had already spent some thirty years in the ministry, having had charges at Hyde and Ormskirk.¹ He died on February 2nd, 1807,² and was interred in the chapel graveyard. Upon his tombstone is the following inscription :—

Interred the Remains of the
Reverend GEORGE CHECKLEY,
Minister of Piatt Chapel,
Who died the second day of February, 1807,
Aged 62 years.
Also ESTHER, his wife,
Who died May 15th, 1822, aged 75 years.

Mr. Checkley was succeeded temporarily by the Rev. Joseph Lawton Siddall, who had been educated at Warrington Academy, and had previously been for many years at Chorley.³ In 1810 the Rev. William Whitelegge, from Fulwood, near Bristol, who had been educated at the Manchester Academy, entered upon his duties as minister, and continued here until his death in 1865. He, too, lies in Platt Chapel graveyard, and from his tombstone the following has been copied :—

In Memory of
The Rev. WILLIAM WHITELEGGE,
For upwards of 50 years minister of this chapel,
Who died February 8th, 1865,
Aged 83 years.

His successor was the Rev. S. A. Steinthal, who accepted the charge in 1864, and retained it until the end of 1870, when he removed to Cross Street Chapel.⁴ The present minister is the Rev. C. T. Poynting, B.A. He is the son of the late Rev. T. E. Poynting, of Monton, was educated at Manchester New College and Heidelberg, and entered upon his ministry

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Correct by the above, the date of death in vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity," which is the one given by Booker.

³ Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁴ Vide ante p. 106.

at Platt Chapel in January, 1871. The present building, which has sitting accommodation for about 240 persons, superseded the chapel built for Henry Finch in 1791, being opened for public worship on May 11th of that year. In 1874 extensive alterations were effected, especially internally. The congregation has been Unitarian in its belief for upwards probably of a century, although, as no doctrinal test is applied to either minister or congregation, no official record has been kept of any changes of belief through which it has passed.

VI.—LONGSIGHT AND RUSHOLME CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

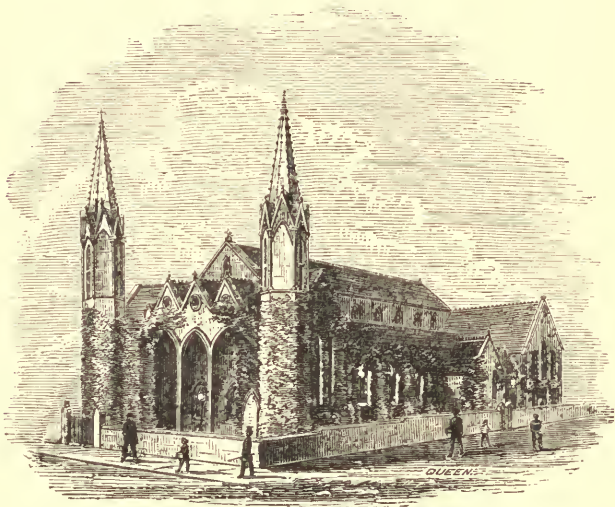
“IN the year 1830,” writes one, “a man, named William Holt, a member of the church at Mosley Street, under the pastoral care of Dr. McAll, came to reside in the village of Longsight for the purpose of carrying on business, being also recommended to go out of the town of Manchester, as he was at that time in very delicate health. He was a good man, and very soon became distressed at the evidently low moral condition of the locality. At that time the village was without either school or place of worship of any description, and notorious for ignorance and immorality, the latter considerably affected by the numbers who each Sabbath came from the town. The first effort was made by Mr. Holt in his own kitchen, assisted by a few friends from Mosley Street, but for want of better accommodation, and because of annoyances whilst engaged in worship, the experiment had to be discontinued.”¹ In 1834 another and more successful attempt was made. A cottage was taken and opened as a Sunday School and preaching room, and amongst the early workers here from Mosley Street was the Rev. R. M. Davies, then a young man in a Manchester warehouse. He tells about services being held in the constable’s house, in which he preached one of the first sermons and that whilst doing so “some men threw a brick, intending

¹ “MS. History of Longsight Independent Chapel,” read at the Jubilee in 1892.

to smash his head, which went instead into the constable's clock face." Another of his stories is that, "having need of a bell with which to ring the congregation in, and having heard of one which could be had at a bargain somewhere in Salford, he forthwith chartered a wheelbarrow, and himself trundled the bell through the streets all the way to Longsight."

In those days the anniversary services, of which much was made, were held in different buildings, on one occasion in a tent procured from Manchester, which was placed in a field, now covered with houses, and opposite the school. At a Congregational Tea Meeting held in December, 1838, the first steps were taken towards the erection of a suitable building. Out of a population in the village of 500 over sixty promised subscriptions, but Dr. McAll's death suspended proceedings until the Christmas following, when a building committee was appointed. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining a site, as the land was principally owned by Churchmen, who objected to let it for such a purpose; but, eventually, Lord Ducie offered to sell a small portion of his estate, provided a respectable building was erected thereon. The offer was accepted, the building commenced in 1841, and on Good Friday, March 25th, 1842, it was opened for public worship, Dr. Halley, of Mosley Street, being the preacher. The total cost, including conveyance of land, was about £595. About the same time a church was formed by Dr. Halley and the Rev. R. Fletcher, the number of members being twelve, of whom only Mrs. Kelly remains at Longsight. Junior students from Lancashire College for a time supplied the pulpit, and in 1843 the Rev. Mr. Jones, a Congregational minister resident in Manchester without charge, assumed the pastorate for six months. At the end of that time Mr. Jones retired, and in 1844 a deputation waited upon Dr. Davidson, of Lancashire College, to ask his acceptance of the pulpit; but the doctor, whilst expressing his warm interest in the cause, stated that his other duties prevented. "In May, the following year," says the MS. history, "Mr. J. G. Rogers, a student of the college, was invited to take the pastorate. On the wishes of the church and congregation being conveyed to Mr. Rogers, he at once complied with the invitation, but as

the college curriculum was not completed, the committee and tutors interposed and prevented the settlement." The Rev. W. Stowell, B.A., a student from Lancashire College, and son of Dr. Stowell, became the minister in the spring of 1847, continuing to be such until 1851. His subsequent pastorates were at Boston Spa, Ware, Camden Town (London), and Ryton, near Newcastle. He died February 1st, 1878, aged fifty-two. In 1851 the sum of £1,700 was expended in the erection of a new school upon the site of the old brick chapel. It was meant



IVY CHAPEL, LONGSIGHT.

to serve for the present as both school and chapel; and the congregation was indebted mainly to Messrs. G. and R. Holt, Pickles, Rumney, Sidebottom, and a few others for that sum. The Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, F.A.S., who had recently resigned his charge at Ashton-under-Lyne, in the history of which the story of Mr. Sutcliffe's life is fully given, accepted the call of the Longsight Church, and began his labours in January, 1852. At a church meeting, held on Wednesday evening, May 19th of the same year, it was resolved "to erect a

new chapel as early as possible." "Ivy Chapel," as the new building is called, because of the ivy which clings to its walls and towers, was opened for public worship on Wednesday, October 19th, 1853. The preacher in the morning was Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool; evening, the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham; and on the following Sunday the pulpit was occupied by the Rev. J. B. Brown, B.A., of London. The building provides sitting accommodation for 800 people, and is described as "probably unique among Congregational Churches in the style of its *façade*,"¹ being taken from the "famous West Front of Peterborough Cathedral." The cost, "including commodious Sunday, Day, Infant school-rooms, &c.," amounted to £6,000. Towards this amount the Chapel Building Society granted £1,500, which, with subscriptions previously raised representing £3,650, left £850 to be obtained at the time of the opening. "The collections on the Wednesday," writes one, "were £385 2s. 3d.; and on the following Lord's Day £335 19s. 6d. The further sum of £139 11s. was raised at the tea party, making a total of £860 12s. 9d."² Mr. Sutcliffe and his friends had, therefore, the joy of entering their new house unencumbered by debt, and it is said that the minister's face beamed like the face of an angel on the opening day. Failing health led to Mr. Sutcliffe's retirement from duty at the end of March, 1855; and four years afterwards he died. The Rev. Watson Smith followed. He was the son of a Lancashire manufacturer, was born at Colne, in November, 1817, and educated at Blackburn Academy. Previous to his settlement at Longsight he had held pastorates at Stroud, Wolverhampton (Queen Street), and St. John's Wood, London. He entered upon his labours at Longsight in October, 1856, removing at the end of 1864 to Wilmslow, in Cheshire. Here he continued his ministry until he was summoned away by death on May 6th, 1878. In July, 1865, the Rev. George Nicholson, B.A., who had been educated at Highbury, and had laboured at Northampton nearly twenty years, became the successor of Mr. Smith at Longsight. About two years afterwards he

¹ The "Congregational Monthly" for January, 1893.

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1854, p. 38.

resigned, subsequently became minister of the church at Putney, London, and is now living at Northampton without charge. The Rev. W. Kirkus, LL.B., began his ministry at Longsight in January, 1869. He was trained at Lancashire College, and had previously laboured at Hackney. Towards the end of 1870, Mr. Kirkus informed his deacons that he had accepted the Principalship of a large school in Higher Broughton, which would not interfere with his duties as minister. In the following July he resigned, and entered the Established Church. The Rev. H. C. Long, from Haverfordwest, whose ministerial training was received at Western College, succeeded Mr. Kirkus in July, 1872, and remained until 1880. The Rev. J. C. McCappin, formerly of Radcliffe, and subsequently of Worsley Road, Swinton,¹ held the pastorate from April, 1882, to the end of 1884. In September, 1886, the Rev. Thomas Evans, from Cardiff, whose collegiate training was obtained at Brecon, succeeded Mr. McCappin at Longsight. He resigned in December, 1888, having received an invitation from the Edmonton Congregational Church, London. He is now labouring at Swansea. The Rev. W. M. Westerby, from Allerton, Bradford, and who had previously had charge of Salem Chapel, Burnley,² commenced his ministry at Longsight in September, 1889, which he continues amidst many signs of encouragement. The following passage from the Church Book of Mosley Street Church gives additional information as to the indebtedness of the cause at Longsight to that church:—

In 1837 the friends of Mosley Street took great interest in a Sunday School meeting in Longsight, rendering financial help, and in May, 1839, it was incorporated with the Mosley Street Sunday School and remained so until April, 1843, when the school was taken over by the newly constructed Congregational Church at Longsight.

Rusholme Congregational Church is the outcome of a Sunday School effort, which began over fifty years ago. On Sunday afternoon, May 26th, 1839, a few friends met together in the upper room of a private house in Nelson Street, Rusholme, to seek for Divine guidance in the establishment of a Sunday School; and on Sunday, July 14th, about forty children were gathered

¹ Vide ante p. 22; also vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

together and taught in a cottage in John Street. In 1853 a small chapel, which had been erected by Baptists, was handed over to the Congregationalists by the trustees, and a committee was formed of friends living in the neighbourhood to carry on the Sunday School in the building, and establish a Sunday Evening service. The first of these services was held February 20th, 1853, the Rev. James Griffin, of Rusholme Road Congregational Church, being the preacher; and a few months later a morning service was commenced. In the month of November, 1853, a church was formed, the Revs. Dr. Halley, Dr. Davidson, and James Gwyther taking part in the service, the pulpit at this time being mainly supplied by students from Lancashire College. On January 4th, 1854, an arrangement was made with the Rev. George Macdonald (now Dr. George Macdonald, the eminent novelist), "to supply the pulpit for four Sundays, beginning on the 8th, and a guinea to be paid him each Sunday." His "views" not being deemed satisfactory, he was not invited "to continue preaching" at the expiration of that period, and in May, 1854, the Rev. J. Hardwick Smith, B.A., became the first pastor. He had been educated at New College, London, and laboured a short time at Stokesley, in Yorkshire. He resigned in April, 1856, and subsequently held pastorates at Maiden Newton, in Dorset, and Kenilworth. He died on November 25th, 1886. His son, Mr. N. H. Smith, M.A., is the Secretary and Bursar of Mansfield College, Oxford. The Rev. D. W. Simon, M.A., educated at Lancashire College, and who had previously laboured a few months at Royston, Herts, became the second minister of Rusholme Congregational Church in January, 1858. He resigned at the end of that year. Dr. Simon, as Principal of the Spring Hill College, and afterwards of the Edinburgh Theological Hall, has rendered valuable service to the denomination. His recent invitation to succeed the late Dr. Falding in the Principalship of the Yorkshire United College, Bradford, and acceptance thereof, has given great satisfaction to his old Lancashire friends, who wish for him there an honourable and useful career. The resignation of Mr. Simon was followed by a period of great difficulty for the young church. It seemed impossible to win any considerable success in a building so unsuitable and unattractive as the one in which

worship was then held. In the year 1862 the bicentenary movement for the erection of memorial chapels was inaugurated; and, stimulated by the offer of £1,000 towards the erection of a new chapel in Rusholme, the Congregationalists in the neighbourhood held a meeting, accepted the offer, and formed a committee to carry out the project. Here, as at Longsight, great difficulties were at first experienced, owing to the refusal of the chief landowner in the district to sanction the sale of any land for the building of a Nonconformist church; and the only available site was the somewhat restricted one on which the church and schools now stand. The plans submitted by Mr. Alfred Waterhouse were selected, and the foundation stone was laid by Mr. George Hadfield, M.P., on Saturday afternoon, June 6th, 1863. The buildings were completed and opened on Thursday, October 13th, 1864, by Dr. Henry Allon, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The cost of the church and schools, including furnishing expenses and interest of money, amounted to £6,010; the cost of the site was £1,250, and a subsequent enlargement of school premises was £1,136, making a total expenditure of £9,031. The buildings are entirely free from debt. The sitting accommodation is for 550, but provision is made for the erection of a south gallery when such is required.

In September, 1865, a cordial and unanimous invitation was sent to the Rev. T. Campbell Finlayson, of Cambridge, which was accepted by him, and he entered upon his duties as pastor in October following. Dr. Finlayson, for such he subsequently became, was born February 5th, 1836, and received his ministerial training at Glasgow University, where he first made the acquaintance of the late Dr. Macfadyen, which ripened into a life-long friendship. His first charge was at Cambridge, where he settled in 1859, whence he removed to Manchester in 1865, being introduced by Dr. Macfadyen to the Rusholme Church, which had then only a membership of about thirty. Frequent breakdowns in health retarded very greatly the success of a minister whose praise was in all the churches; but his own people, who knew him best, loved him deeply. For twenty-seven years Dr. Finlayson exercised in Manchester a

ministry which, if quiet and retiring, was most rich and beautiful. In 1889 he was elected to the Presidency of the Lancashire Congregational Union, but his natural shrinking from public positions prevented him from reading the address which he had prepared for the occasion.¹ After a long and painful illness, he died on February 7th, 1893, in Glasgow, at the residence of his brother, an eminent physician in that city, and was interred in the Necropolis there. A memorial service was held in Rusholme Church at the time of the interment, when Dr. Wilkins, a deacon and deeply attached friend, delivered an appropriate address to a sorrowing congregation. Mr. J. C. Norbury, another deacon, in a contribution to *The Congregational Monthly*, says:—

His ministry was marked throughout by an unbroken spirit of harmony, and his attached people now look back over the interval with feelings of devout gratitude to God that it was their privilege to have, as their minister and teacher, one whose beautiful life was a joy and an inspiration to them and the remembrance of which will ever be fragrant as the days and years go by. As a true and sincere man, they honoured him; as a wise and faithful teacher, they loved him; and as a consistent and devout Christian, they revered him. Of him it may indeed be said, "The memory of the just is blessed."

Dr. Finlayson was the author of numerous theological works, and the degree of Doctor of Divinity he received from his own *alma mater* in June, 1891. The Rev. J. Kirk Maconachie, educated at Western College, and for a short time assistant to Dr. Mackennal, of Bowdon, assumed the pastorate of the vacant church in 1893, beginning his labours on September 10th.

¹ This duty was discharged by Dr. Wilkins, one of his deacons, and a distinguished Professor of Owens College. Dr. Wilkins was himself the President of the Union in 1892.

VII.—RUSHOLME ROAD, TIPPING STREET, AND STOCKPORT ROAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

“A NUMBER of pious individuals, solicitous for the extension of the Redeemer’s kingdom in their own vicinity, issued a circular in 1825 ‘To the Inhabitants of the Townships of Chorlton Row and Ardwick.’ It was an appeal for subscriptions that a place of worship might be erected and church formed ‘after the Independent model.’” The pastors of the other Congregational churches in the town sympathised with the movement, and the circular stated that land had been “purchased as the site of a chapel, most advantageously situated near to the new burial-ground in Rusholme Road, about equally distant from Oxford Street and Ardwick Green.”¹ Accordingly the “present spacious and convenient edifice” was built and opened for worship on Thursday, August 31st, 1826, when the morning preacher was the Rev. James Parsons, of York; evening, the Rev. William Thorp, of Bristol; the Revs. William Roby, James Pridie, and J. A. Coombs assisting. On the following Sunday Mr. Thorp preached both morning and evening. “The entire cost of the chapel erection,” writes one, “amounted to £6,014 17s. 8d., of which £2,500 was borrowed on mortgage, £3,352 19s. 2½d. was subscribed, and the balance of £161 3s. 2½d. was lent by Mr. George Hadfield, the secretary.”² On Friday, June 22nd, 1827, “in the vestry of the new chapel, Chorlton Road,” twenty-eight persons agreed to form themselves into a Congregational Church, “with a view to the Redeemer’s glory and the extension of His kingdom, and for their own mutual comfort and edification.” Amongst them appear the names of the Rev. James Kenworthy, who, two years previously, had resigned his charge at Horwich, being at the time nearly eighty years of age;³ the Rev. William Manning Walker, who had seceded with part of his congregation from the Unitarian Chapel in Preston, and founded the second Congregational

¹ Jubilee Manual of Rusholme Road Chapel for 1877; also “Congregational Magazine” for 1827, p. 511, and for 1829, p. 623.

² Jubilee Manual.

³ Vide vols. i. and iii. of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”

church in that town, the pastorate of which he had held about fourteen years;¹ and Mr. George Hadfield, whose name is so worthily associated not alone with Manchester Congregationalism, but with the interests of the denomination at large. The Church was publicly recognised on Friday evening, August 10th, of the same year, when the following ministers took part in the service:—Revs. S. McAll, W. Roby, W. M. Walker, and Dr. McAll. The Rev. James Griffin, a student from High-bury College, and son of the Rev. John Griffin, of Portsea, began his duties as the first minister of the church on Sunday, May 10th, 1829, preaching in the morning from Psalm cxviii., 25, and in the evening from Isaiah xxviii., 16. Mr. Griffin was ordained on September 16th following, when Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, “expounded the views of the nature and discipline of a Christian Church as commonly held by Independents;” the Rev. Wm. Roby offered the ordination prayer; the Rev. John Griffin addressed his son in a solemn charge—“Be thou faithful unto death;” and Dr. McAll preached in the evening. It is stated that more than forty ministers were present at the services. “Eighteen years of unremitting labour,” says the Church Manual, “told on the health of the pastor, and from June to December, 1843, he was obliged to spend in rest and change of scene. His absence brought out the self-reliance of the church and congregation, who determined to signalise his return by an arrangement to pay off the debt on the chapel, £1,500, which was shortly accomplished.” In 1852 the state of the minister’s health pointed to the need of assistance, and an attempt was made to secure the services of Rev. Joseph Stuchbery, B.A., then a student of New College, London, but the effort failed. “To the great grief of the church,” Mr. Griffin resigned at the end of September, 1854, and removed to Hastings. He retired from active work a few years ago, and is still resident at Hastings, being the oldest Lancashire Congregational minister living, and one of the oldest in England. His “Memories of the Past,” published in 1883, gives a vivid and interesting picture of Manchester religious life during the period of his ministry here. The Rev. Alexander Thomson,

¹ Vide vol. i. of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”

M.A., was appointed his successor. Educated at Spring Hill College, he was ordained in 1842, and was Professor of Biblical Literature in Glasgow Theological Academy from 1846 to 1855. On May 27th of the latter year he entered upon the pastorate of the church at Rusholme Road. "Shortly after Mr. Thomson's settlement," reads the Manual for 1877, "the congregation began to feel the effects of the habit, which has now become so general on the part of the wealthier classes of the community, and of others also, of removing from town to reside some miles away in the country, which has naturally led many families to sever their connection with the places of worship they once regularly attended. This habit has been gradually modifying the social elements of the congregation to a considerable extent during the last twenty years; but we have much reason to be thankful that the zeal, the active labours, and the liberality of the church have not declined in consequence." During the sixteen years that have since elapsed, deaths and removals have wrought not a few changes as might be expected, but the spirit of hopefulness and activity have not decayed. On Saturday, April 25th, 1863, Mr. John Hopkinson laid the foundation stone of new schools, which were opened on April 19th of the following year. The cost was about £3,500, to which should be added £300, the cost of an infant school subsequently erected. That work done, the church immediately undertook to renovate the interior of the chapel at a cost of £2,493. The re-opening services were held on June 25th, 1865, when the Rev. James Griffin, the former pastor, was the preacher. Interesting services in celebration of the Jubilee of the church were held on Sunday, September 24th, 1876, and Monday and Tuesday following. The Rev. W. L. Alexander, D.D., of Edinburgh, was the preacher on Sunday morning, his text being 1 Tim. i., 15. At the close of the sermon Dr. Alexander remarked:—

That he had selected his present text because he had ascertained from his notes that nearly forty-six years ago he had preached in that chapel from the same passage of Scripture. He was then a young man, at the commencement of his career, and he felt very grateful to God that now, coming among the Rusholme Road congregation on the verge of old age, he had the same doctrine to preach and the same good tidings to proclaim that he endeavoured to preach and to proclaim half a century ago.¹

¹ "Jubilee Manual."

The preacher in the evening was the Rev. James Parsons, of York, whose text was 11 Peter i., 13, 14. On Monday evening a united communion service was held, and on Tuesday evening the pastor presided over a *soirée* and public meeting, and amongst the speakers were the Revs. James Cunningham (Presbyterian), Watson Smith, James Parsons, and Dr. McKerrow. It was a source of regret that Mr. Griffin, though present, owing to the condition of his health was unable to take any part in the services. Dr. Thomson—for such he became a few years ago, obtaining his degree of D.D. from his *alma mater*, the University of Aberdeen—is still the honoured pastor of Rusholme Road Church. In 1875 he was elected to the Chairmanship of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, having three years previously filled the same responsible position in the Lancashire Congregational Union. In addition to his pastorate, since 1876 he has been on the professorial staff of the Lancashire College, holding the Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, and by his students is not less beloved than by his church. Dr. Thomson completed the Jubilee of his ministry last year, nearly forty years of which have been spent in his present church. He is the oldest Congregational minister in charge resident in Manchester, and he has seen all the churches around him change their pastors; some of them many times. It is an interesting coincidence that the Jubilee of the College with which he has been so long and happily associated is nearly identified with the Jubilee of his own ministry; a circumstance which was very pleasingly commemorated at the close of the meetings held in connection with that event in the end of June, 1893, when a handsome testimonial and gift were presented to him from his old students of Glasgow Academy and Lancashire College, and from friends and supporters of the latter institution. The Sunday School in Rusholme Road, along with the branch school in Saville Street, has long held an honourable and influential position, and is remembered by many in different parts of the world with grateful affection and esteem. A large proportion of adults may be found in both schools, which include together about a thousand scholars, forming an admirable nursery for the church. Mr. Griffin's interesting book, previously mentioned, contains sketches of some of the superintendents, especially Mr. D. Jackson and Mr. George Darling, which will repay perusal.

Tipping Street Congregational Church originated with Mr. John Smith, a Manchester merchant. Mr. Smith, in some autobiographical notices, says that his parents were "temporally poor," and that in early life he attended a Sunday School in Copperas Street, Shudehill, connected with Mr. Roby's church at Cannon Street. In 1826 he joined Mr. Roby's church, then in Grosvenor Street, but in 1828, removing to Nelson Street, Plymouth Grove, he became one of the first members of the new Congregational Church at Rustholme Road. As superintendent also of the school, he served that church until August, 1835, when a small preaching-room in Lower Temple Street becoming vacant was offered to him. "On the thirtieth of August the same year," says he ("fully believing that I was scripturally warranted, enjoined, and encouraged), I, in this upper room, preachingly addressed a few plain, poor neighbours and children." These are said to be amongst the "events and circumstances which led to the purchase of land and the building" of Tipping Street Chapel. At his own cost the chapel was erected by him shortly after, the church being formed at the same time. For some years Mr. Smith kept the building in his own hands, but subsequently it was put in trust; he also occupied the pulpit until 1851, when he resigned.¹ In 1853 the Rev. Joseph Spencer, who had been educated at Rotherham College, and had laboured previously about eleven years at Bakewell, in Derbyshire, became the pastor. Considerations of health led him to return to the country after a three years' residence in Manchester, and he became the minister of the Congregational Church at Chinley. There he laboured until his death, on Sunday morning, June 10th, 1860, at the age of forty-five years. The Rev. Samuel Lewin, educated at Rotherham College, and who had previously held

¹ Mr. Smith held views adverse to a paid ministry, calling it "that existing, insidious, professional, monopolising, ministerial, pecuniary policy." In the conveyance of the chapel to trustees, dated March, 1853, occurs the following: "Whereas the said John Smith has ever since the erection of the chapel been the recognized and sole minister and pastor thereof, to which solemn office he was more especially set apart by an ordination service in the month of September, 1841, and has performed all the duties pertaining to the office of minister and pastor, and the said church and congregation are desirous that the services of the said John should be continued as such minister and pastor, &c."

pastorates at Hartlepool and Chorley, followed in 1856. He remained until about 1868, when he removed to Ilfracombe, where he died December 29th, 1875.¹ For several months the Tipping Street Chapel pulpit was supplied by a Mr. Davis, who in 1872 was followed by the Rev. T. E. Sweeting, from Ilminster, in Somersetshire. In September, 1874, he resigned and removed to Churchtown, where, after holding the pastorate of that church for several years, he still resides without charge. It was during his time that the Tipping Street Church first sought and obtained assistance from the County Union Funds. In April, 1876, the Rev. C. T. Plank, educated at Bristol, and who had previously laboured at Shaftesbury, succeeded Mr. Sweeting. In October, 1881, overtures were made by the church to the Stockport Road Congregational Church with a view to amalgamation, and after several meetings of representatives of the two churches a decision to that effect was arrived at. Ninety members were transferred from Tipping Street to Stockport Road, and Mr. Plank became the minister of the united churches. Tipping Street Chapel, which had accommodation for 500 people, was continued for some time as a mission station and Sunday School, and in 1889 it was sold for £800 to the City Mission, the proceeds being devoted to the fund for the erection of the "New Octagon Church."

The following circular, issued in January, 1868, tells about the first efforts towards the formation of the Stockport Road Congregational Church :—

Congregational Preaching Room.—It is respectfully announced to the heads of families and others, in this neighbourhood, that the large room over the Co-operative Stores, at the corner of Lister Street, has just been opened for the purposes of religious worship and a Sunday School. All who are not already connected with and attached to any other places as worshippers or scholars will be cordially welcomed.

Hours of Service—10-30 a.m., 6-30 p.m.

„ School—9 a.m., 2 p.m.

A church was formed in the same year, and "first-class students" from Lancashire College were promised as supplies. On Saturday, October 15th, 1870, the foundation stone of a new school-

¹ Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

chapel was laid by Mr. John Lamb, one of the originators¹ of the church, and Dr. Thomson gave an address on Congregational principles. The building was completed and opened on April 11th, 1871, the Rev. Watson Smith, of Wilmslow, being the preacher. In September following, the Rev. W. H. Drewett, who had been trained at Didsbury Wesleyan College, and had previously been the minister of the Congregational Church at Bognor, in Sussex, entered upon his duties at Stockport Road. In January, 1876, the church, which had received aid from the funds of the County Union for five and a half years, resolved to dispense with further assistance. Mr. Drewett held the pastorate until September, 1881, when he resigned, owing to differences of opinion respecting the erection of a new chapel. As previously stated, the amalgamation with Tipping Street Church took place in December, 1881, and the Rev. C. T. Plank became the minister of Stockport Road Church under the new conditions. He remained until 1885, when he removed to Halesowen, in Worcestershire, where he is still labouring. The Rev. J. R. Murray, M.A., a student from Lancashire College, entered upon the pastorate on the first Sunday in February, 1887. The need of a new and more convenient building for worship had been long felt, and the offer of the Tipping Street Chapel trustees to hand over the money realised by the sale of their building to the Stockport Road Church, on condition that an effort was made "to raise the rest of the money requisite for building an appropriate church," gave definiteness to the movement. The New Octagon Church, the plan of which is "a combination of the Greek cross and the octagon—a novelty in Manchester"—is in course of erection.² It will have sitting capacity

¹ Mr. John Haughton is the only one of the original promoters of the movement still remaining in the neighbourhood.

² Since the above was written the New Octagon Church has been opened for public worship. The following are the dates, with preachers:—

Monday,	June 5th,	1893.....	Rev. C. S. Horne, M.A., London.
Tuesday,	„ 6th,	„	Public meeting, Dr. Thomson presiding.
Wednesday,	„ 7th,	„	Rev. C. F. Aked (Baptist), Liverpool.
Thursday,	„ 8th,	„	Rev. J. McDougall, Manchester.
Friday,	„ 9th,	„	Rev. W. J. Dawson, London.
Sunday,	„ 11th,	„	Rev. Dr. Simon, Principal of Yorkshire United College.
Sunday,	„ 18th,	„	Rev. A. N. Johnson, M.A., London.
Sunday,	„ 25th,	„	Rev. Prof. Bennett, M.A., Hackney and New Colleges, London.



OCTAGON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, STOCKPORT ROAD, MANCHESTER.

for 600 people, being 160 more than the building could accommodate which it is about to supersede, and the estimated cost is about £4,500. Mr. Murray, who is the son of the late Rev. Alexander Murray, for many years Congregational minister at Peterborough, still exercises his ministry amongst an attached people. Nor is he unknown in the literary world; his "Hindu Pastors" (being the Sir Peregrine Maitland's prize essay, University of Cambridge, 1891) has met with a hearty welcome from all interested in missionary work in India; and under his editorship *The Congregational Monthly* has widened its reputation and power.

VIII.—HULME (NOW ZION CHAPEL, STRETFORD ROAD), GREENHEYS, CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES, WITH VINE STREET MISSION CHURCH.

IN a MS. account of Congregationalism in Hulme, in the possession of Mr. G. H. Adshead, of Pendleton, appears the following:—

JACKSON'S LANE CHAPEL, HULME.—At the commencement of the year 1812, an effort was made, by the establishment of a weekly cottage preaching, to introduce the gospel amongst the growing population of Hulme. Mr. Roby, Mr. Bradley, and Dr. Jack, assisted by several lay preachers, regularly conducted the worship of God in a small house in Moss Lane. On the 23rd of October, 1814, a Sunday School was commenced in the dwelling-house of a Mr. Hackett, in Princess Street, in which, by the diligence of the teachers, and by the assistance of several kind friends who came from Grosvenor Street to address the children, much good appears to have been done. This place being insufficient to accommodate the children, the attendance of which had greatly increased, several gentlemen connected with the Temperance Unions in Manchester interested themselves in order to an erection of a more commodious schoolroom, capable at the same time of being occupied as a place of worship, and admitting of enlargement. This place was opened on the 17th August, 1817, on which occasion Mr. Roby, Mr. Bradley, and the late Mr. Hampson, the missionary, preached. From that time divine worship was held every Sabbath evening. Mr. Jonathan Lees, one of the deacons of Grosvenor Street, was most frequently engaged on these occasions. Shortly after this Mr. Smedley took charge of

the congregation. He continued about nine months, and then removed to Milnthorpe.¹ Supplies were then chiefly obtained from Blackburn Academy, till the trustees and other friends of the place invited Mr. George Rogers, a student of Rotherham, to supply as a candidate. Having been amongst the people from December 2, 1820, to February 11, 1821, he was invited to become their minister, and having accepted their invitation, he continued his studies till midsummer, during which interval² the building was enlarged and a gallery erected. He commenced his stated labours on the 8th June, 1821. Discord, however, was soon introduced amongst the people, and blasted for a time those hopes of prosperity which his friends of the interest had justly entertained. Under this state of things Mr. Rogers thought it most prudent to withdraw. He left about July, the following year, and the church, at the recommendation of the trustees, and in accordance with a resolution passed by itself, was dissolved. The congregation was now much decreased.

The enlarged chapel was opened on September 20th, 1821, when the preachers were the Revs. Wm. Roby and R. S. McAll, then of Macclesfield. The Rev. George Rogers referred to in the foregoing extract was, I imagine, the venerable minister of that name who died at South Norwood, September 12th, 1891, at the age of ninety-three years, being at the time probably the oldest Congregational minister in the world. He was for a few years minister of Albany Road Chapel, Camberwell. In 1856 he resigned to become the first Principal and Theological Tutor of Spurgeon's College, a position which he held until 1867, when he retired. Between Mr. Spurgeon and himself, though of different denominations, the warmest friendship existed until they were divided by death. After the dissolution of the Church the pulpit was supplied for a short time by "Messrs. Penkethman,³ Hart, and a few others." The Rev. John Smith, a student from Blackburn Academy, after spending his midsummer vacation amongst the people in 1823, was invited to take charge of the congregation for two years. The invitation was accepted, and the following

¹ Vide vols. i. and iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Not quite accurate. The enlarged chapel was opened in September, 1821.

³ Doubtless the Rev. John Penkethman, formerly of Wharton and afterwards of Pendlebury. Vide ante p. 18; also vols. ii., iii., and iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

Christmas he began his labours as minister. Before the end of the two years Mr. Smith acceded to the request of the people to become their stated pastor. On June 10th, 1825, the church was re-formed, the Revs. Wm. Roby, S. Bradley, and W. M. Walker assisting in the service. On September 8th following Mr. Smith was ordained, when the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, of Ashton-under-Lyne, opened the services with reading and prayer; Dr. Payne, of Blackburn Academy, delivered the introductory sermon; Dr. Fletcher, then of London, gave the charge to the minister; the Rev. S. Bradley presented the ordination prayer; and the Rev. Wm. Roby preached to the people. The MS. account proceeds:—

Although for a time Mr. Smith was encouraged in his expectations of raising a congregation, the attendance, notwithstanding his strenuous exertions, afterwards declined. Thus disappointed, and having become a widower, he began to cherish the wish for missionary services. At length he offered himself, was accepted, and appointed by the directors of the London Missionary Society to labour in Madras. He resigned his charge at Hulme on the 24th August, 1827, but continued to preach there till he left England in the spring of the following year.

Mr. Smith had been a member of the Congregational Church, at Ashton-under-Lyne, and his sister, Mary Smith, was afterwards the wife of the celebrated missionary Dr. Robert Moffat. Failing health led Mr. Smith to return to England, but in 1842 he had so far recovered that he went back to his work in Madras. The year following, on returning to Madras by sea from a distant station where he had been assisting in an ordination service, a storm arose, the vessel was lost, and Mr. Smith was drowned. The congregation at Hulme had become very much reduced about the time of Mr. Smith's retirement, and the trustees had almost come to the conclusion to sell the building with the view of liquidating the debt, amounting to £500. The Rev. James Gwyther, however, another Blackburn student, having occasionally supplied the pulpit with great acceptance, was requested to preach for a month during the midsummer vacation of 1828. This led to his being invited to the pastorate, and on January 4th, 1829, he began his labours as minister of the church. His ordination took place on April 7th following, when Dr. Payne gave the charge to the minister, and Dr. Raffles preached to the people. In 1836 the church ceased to be a recipient from the

County Union Funds, and the Report for that year states that a "benevolent individual, a deacon of Mr. Gwyther's church, has undertaken, at his own expense, to support a home missionary, whose time is to be entirely devoted to domestic visitation and the holding of religious meetings for the instruction of the people." In 1842 the congregation removed from Jackson's Lane¹ to the new building, called "Zion Chapel," in Stretford Road. It was opened for worship on Thursday morning, May 5th, 1842, when, after introductory services by the Rev. J. L. Poore, Dr. Raffles "delivered a powerful and deeply impressive sermon from Psalm xi., 4—"The Lord is in His Holy Temple."² The evening preacher was Dr. Harris, President of Cheshunt College. On the following Sunday Dr. Andrew Reed, of London, conducted two services, and on Monday the Rev. James Parsons. The cost of the structure was about £4,000, and the style of architecture is said to be Roman, and "of the Corinthian order, the example of Jupiter Stator being adopted." "The case," says the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1842, "is one of deep interest. The congregation has been raised under Mr. Gwyther's labours from a state of the deepest depression, there having been only seventeen persons present when he first preached in the old chapel; whilst the district in which his chapel stands, comprising nearly thirty thousand persons, for whom one church and a small Methodist Chapel are the only places of public worship provided, calls loudly for Christian sympathy and Christian help." In 1870 Mr. Gwyther resigned, and retired from active labour after a ministry of over forty years. For a considerable portion of that time he held the position of Secretary to Lancashire College, and was co-secretary with Dr. Raffles to the Lancashire County Union. He died at Mary Church, Torquay, on Sunday, March 24th, 1878, aged seventy-two years. Mr. Gwyther had associated with him in the pastorate of Zion Chapel, for a few years previous to his retirement, the Rev. S. B. Driver, a student from Lancashire College, and now the pastor of the Congregational Church at Lowestoft, Suffolk. His son

¹ The old chapel was subsequently let on "easy terms" to the Welsh Congregationalists (vide p. 206.)

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1842, p. 397.

is the Rev. J. H. Gwyther, B.A., of Liscard, Birkenhead. In the volume of Lancashire County Union Reports, from 1808 to 1863, kindly lent me for this work by the present Secretary, the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, is the following note in Mr. Gwyther's handwriting :—

My dear and honoured friend, Dr. Raffles, with whom it was my privilege to work as co-secretary for ten years, collected and preserved a complete set of our Union Reports from the commencement of the Association to the year 1862. Not long before his death he gave these Reports to myself, with the request that I should leave them at my decease to be the property of the Union. I have added to those collected by the dear Doctor, the one read at the last meeting before his death, and now present them to the Union as an interesting memorial of Doctor Raffles, and of his love to the Union.

Manchester, Sept. 1st, 1863.

JAMES GWYTHER.

The Rev. Edwin Simon, a student from Spring Hill College, became Mr. Gwyther's successor in 1870. He remained until 1883, when he removed to Bath, where he still labours. He is brother to the late Rev. Henry Simon, of Westminster Chapel, London, and the Rev. Thomas Simon, of Balham. The present minister, the Rev. H. H. Brayshaw, a student from Airedale College, entered upon his labours in 1885. The chapel has sitting accommodation for 900 persons, and amongst the many forms of Christian activity associated with the church is a P.S.A. Society, which has won very considerable success.

During some part of Mr. Gwyther's pastorate the "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" gives as mission stations of the church, Mulberry Street and Chestnut Street, concerning which the Rev. S. B. Driver says :—

Mulberry Street runs at the back of Zion Chapel. There was *no* separate building there, simply a back entrance to Zion Chapel premises, and from it large numbers of the scholars, &c., would come, and district visiting and tract distribution were carried on. A Cottage Meeting used to be held in Chestnut Street, Hulme, but that was during years preceding my association with Mr. Gwyther. There was no Mission Room—such rooms were not in vogue in those days as they happily are now-a-days.

The Greenheys Congregational Church is an off-shoot from the church at Chorlton Road. A building in Wood Street, erected for

the services of the Church of England, was purchased by the late Mr. Woodward, and used for several years as a school and preaching room, under the oversight of Chorlton Road Church. The work prospering, Mr. Woodward presented the Wood Street School to trustees, together with additional land, upon which a new church was built by subscription, the foundation stone being laid by Sir James Watts, on the 26th of February, 1870. The cost of the structure was £4,000, towards which the Chapel Building Society promised £1,000, and the accommodation is for 800 people. It was opened for public worship on December 7th, 1870, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Wm. Scott, formerly of Hindley, near Wigan.¹ A separate church was formed June 28th, 1871, when ninety-one members were dismissed from the Chorlton Road Church for the purpose. Mr. Scott removed to Tottenham, London, in 1874, and is now the minister of Pitt Street Church, Sydney, New South Wales.² He was succeeded the same year by the Rev. W. J. Hall, who had been educated at the Pastor's College, and had laboured for several years at Stroud. He resigned in 1879, and the year following the present minister, the Rev. James Clough, from Grimshaw Street Congregational Church, Preston,³ assumed the pastorate.

The Vine Street Congregational Mission, Hulme, is located in a densely populated neighbourhood. The work was commenced in 1878 in the form of cottage meetings, the outcome of a Young Men's Bible Class, conducted by Mr. J. S. Naphtali, in connection with the Greenheys Congregational Church. A room was taken for a few shillings per week, and eventually the present premises were secured, which have since been enlarged, but still prove inadequate for the work, though accommodation is provided for about 200 persons. In its early history the mission was under the management of a joint committee of friends from the Greenheys Church and the workers at Vine Street, but after a time it was decided that it be managed by its own workers. In 1885 a Mission Church was formed with seventeen members, and an executive

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Mr. Scott has recently returned to this country with the intention of taking up ministerial work here.

³ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

committee was appointed, with president, treasurer, and secretary. The work is conducted on purely mission lines, the object being to win those who attend no place of worship. The membership of the church now stands at eighty-five; in the Sunday School there is an average attendance of 150 in the afternoon; and the Sunday morning and evening services secure good congregations. A bazaar is shortly to be held to raise funds for the purchase of larger and more convenient premises for its many forms of Christian activity. Mr. J. S. Naphtali, the founder of the Mission, is still its president.

IX.—ANCOATS, OLDHAM ROAD, AND ASHLEY LANE
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

CONGREGATIONALISM in Ancoats is very much older than the dates in the "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" suggest. The Union Report ending April, 1820, says:—

Desirous of sparing the funds as much as possible, the Manchester friends are endeavouring to establish two distinct interests, one in Hulme, the other in Ancoats, at their own private expense.

Though not precisely in the way indicated in the preceding passage, an "interest" was established at Ancoats almost immediately, and although not distinctly Congregational at first, it eventually gave birth to the Ancoats Congregational Church. In December, 1821, "a plain but substantial chapel" was opened, the purpose of which is stated in the subjoined account of the services on the occasion.

On Sunday, Dec. 23rd [1821], and the following Christmas Day, public services were held, with crowded and deeply attentive congregations, at the opening for Divine worship of a new chapel in Canal Street, Ancoats Lane, Manchester, the erection of which in this important district (previously destitute of any place of worship, although containing 20,000 souls) is owing, we understand, to a Christian union of their efforts and liberality in furtherance of the gospel of our common salvation between a number of respectable individuals here of the Independent and Baptist persuasions, and that portion of the Tent Methodists, whose disinterested and evangelical labours

(recently undertaken in Manchester, and divinely blessed) have already made a powerful impression upon, and it is now hoped will become permanently and more extensively useful to the uninstructed and perishing poor of our teeming population. The Sunday morning and evening sermons were preached by Messrs. Pocock and Pyer, from Bristol; Mr. Birt, of York Street Chapel, Manchester, preached in the evening. On Christmas Day Mr. Pyer preached in the morning, and Dr. Raffles in the evening. The devotional parts of the services were conducted by the ministers usually employed in Tent preaching."¹

The cost of the building, it is said, "scarcely equalled £1,200," and without a gallery there was accommodation for "upwards of 1,200 persons, chiefly on forms conveniently and closely disposed;" whilst for £700 more a gallery might be erected to accommodate "in the same way 800 additional hearers."

The Rev. John Pyer, referred to in the foregoing passage, was born at Bristol, December 3rd, 1790, and brought up a Methodist. By occupation he was a chemist, but eventually he sold his business, and "for nine years continued to preach, with others, in tents and the open air in the city." With them originated about 1820 the Tent Methodist movement, which reached both Manchester and Liverpool.² The chapel in Ancoats, whose opening services are above recorded, was called the "Tent Methodists' Chapel," and Mr. Pyer appears to have discharged the duties of minister. Mr. Pyer eventually became a Congregational minister, "chiefly through the preaching of the late Dr. McAll, which he attended as often as his own multifarious labours allowed," and his people "rather than lose their beloved minister consented to remain with him, and the church was recognised by the Manchester Independents as belonging to the Denomination."³ Mr. Pyer left Manchester about 1830, being called to London, where he laboured about four years as the "devoted agent of the Christian Instruction Society." Subsequently he held Congregational pastorates at South Molton and Devonport, dying at the latter place April 7th, 1859. After Mr. Pyer's removal the chapel "and its promoters were consigned to the tender mercies of the

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1822, p. 114.

² Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ "Congregational Year Book" for 1860, p. 205.

Court of Chancery, and ultimately it fell into the hands of some zealous members of the Established Church."¹

On Sunday, November 27th, 1836, a new Congregational chapel was opened in Every Street, Ancoats, the preachers being the Rev. S. Gibbons, of Cross Street, Cheshire, in the morning, and in the evening the Rev. S. S. Wilson, of London, "late missionary to Malta and Greece." The chapel, which was erected by "the members of the Christian Church formerly connected with Canal Street Chapel, Ancoats, kindly aided by some of their friends in Manchester," measured "16 yards by 13 yards," and had sitting accommodation for about 400 persons. A commodious schoolroom, under the chapel, for 400 scholars was let as a day school at a rental of £16 per annum, and the Rev. John Wheeldon is mentioned as having "for more than three years laboured among them in word and doctrine" with much encouragement.² Mr. Wheeldon subsequently ministered for several

¹ "Life of Dr. Bunting," p. 531. The above sentence is part of a not very sympathetic passage in Dr. Bunting's life in relation to the Tent Methodist movement and its experiences in Manchester. As so little is known about that movement the reader will welcome the passage: "Certain zealous but heady Methodists in Bristol, laudably anxious to evangelise the dark villages in its neighbourhood, adopted what is not an uncommon practice in these times, and taking a tent with them pitched it where they chose, preached the Gospel, and, doubtless, did a great deal of good. But there is much danger of irregular agencies interfering with the ordained and systematic work of Christian churches, and the experience of a century and a half has taught our Connexion that, on the whole, and in the long run, we succeed best, both in winning and keeping souls, when we proceed on our own old lines. The Bristol ministers required that the new undertaking should be identified with and brought under the control of the Methodist Society there. This was absolutely refused; and so a new sect was founded, and two brethren of the names of Pocock and Pyer became its apostles. For a very few years it was known as "The Tent Methodists." Pyer ultimately became a Congregational minister. Some malcontents at Manchester displayed their sympathy with the movement after a curious fashion, and built a large, square brick building in a neighbourhood greatly demanding Christian labour. After some years the place and its promoters were consigned to the tender mercies of the Court of Chancery, and ultimately it fell into the hands of some zealous members of the Established Church, and is, at last, doing good service to the cause of God.

² "Evangelical Magazine," for 1837, p. 31.

years to a congregation in Bridge Street, unconnected with the County Union, and in 1870 entered the Established Church. On Tuesday evening, September 20th, 1842, the Rev. Giles Hoyle, from Stalybridge, was publicly recognised as minister, the Revs. Dr. Clunie, James Griffin, Dr. Halley, Richard Fletcher, James Gwyther, Jonathan Wood, and Joseph Hague taking part in the service. Mr. Hoyle removed to Northowram in 1849,¹ and the church appears to have collapsed shortly afterwards. In the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1857 is an account of the recognition service, on Wednesday, October 7th, of the Rev. Thomas Adams as pastor, from which the following passage is extracted :—

The commencement of this interest is a genuine effort at church extension, the movement having originated at a general deacons' meeting in the city, at which a committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements, who now have the satisfaction of seeing the first pastor settled among an increasing people, surrounded by a dense population, and with a Sunday school already numbering four hundred on the books, and which owes much to the zealous students of Lancashire College.²

Mr. Adams had been trained for the ministry at Newport Pagnel, and previous to his settlement at Manchester had held pastorates at Gornal and Stone, in Staffordshire. For about three years he ministered to the congregation at Ancoats,³ the County Union giving generous assistance. He removed from Manchester to Newton, in Montgomeryshire, and subsequently to Daventry, where he died in May, 1879, aged fifty-seven years. The experiment at Ancoats had been disappointing, and with the removal of Mr. Adams the County Union ceased its grant; but in 1861 a successor to the pastorate was found in the person of the Rev. E. K. Evans, a student from Lancashire College. He removed to Woolton,⁴ near Liverpool, in 1863, and is now resident, without charge, at Chiswick. The Rev. R. A. Bertram, from Lymm, Cheshire, followed with a brief pastorate, removing to Openshaw in May,

¹ Vide p. 318.

² Page 737.

³ There was no church at the time.

⁴ Vide vol. vi., of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

1865.¹ In the County Union Report, ending April, 1865, Ancoats re-appears, and the success which had followed the efforts put forth is described as "encouraging." On October 4th of that year "the rented chapel in Every Street" was vacated by the congregation for a new and handsome building, with accommodation for over 1,000 persons. At the opening services the Revs. E. Mellor, M.A., and Dr. Parker were the preachers, and on the following Sunday services were conducted by the Revs. H. Griffiths and H. W. Parkinson. The cost was about £6,000.² In the following September the Rev. J. Christien, from Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, accepted an invitation to the pastorate. Shortly afterwards work "in this crowded district" was "suspended" by the sale of the newly-opened building to the Midland Railway Company, and Mr. Christien removed to North Shields in 1868. In December, 1869 the present Ancoats Congregational Chapel was opened, with sitting accommodation for about 600 persons. The Rev. W. B. Macwilliam, whose ministerial training was received at Glasgow, and who had previously laboured several years at Middlewich, in Cheshire, became the minister in 1870, and in 1872 a church was formed with greater prospects of success than had yet appeared. Failing health led to the minister's resignation in 1872. Subsequently Mr. Macwilliam became the pastor of Albion Chapel, Nottingham, and is now resident at Hornsey without charge. The Rev. Richard Solomon, educated at Glasgow, and minister for a short time at Collyhurst Street, Manchester, succeeded to the pastorate at Ancoats in 1872. He continued until 1878, and eventually settled at Carmarthen, subsequently entering the Established Church. The Rev. J. Sinclair, from Bermondsey, had charge of the place a few months, and in 1882 the Rev. William Davies, a student from Lancashire College, became the pastor. He resigned after "a patient, laborious, and faithful ministry" of nearly ten years, and is now at Burnley. Mr. Charles Garnett is the Evangelist now ministering unto the congregation. The effort to plant Congregationalism in this part of Manchester

¹ Vide ante p. 63; also vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² An engraving of this really splendid building, forming an acute angle between Great Ancoats Street and Palmerston Street, and whose tower was 85 feet high, is given in the "Congregational Year Book" for 1866.

has lacked neither persistency nor courage, but misfortunes have been plentiful, and the success, so far, has been inconsiderable.

The *Evangelical Magazine* for 1851 gives the following account of the origin of the Oldham Road Congregational Church :—

A Sunday School for children and adults was opened some years ago in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Bedell, assisted by some of his fellow students at the college, undertook the management of it, and conducted a public service on the Sunday evening. The school rapidly increased, and the large room was soon crowded at evening service. The number of services was then increased, and increased success followed. The entire management of the whole affair now rested with Mr. Bedell, and on leaving college he devoted himself entirely to the work of nurturing and establishing the infant cause. After he had laboured for some time with increasing acceptance and success, the propriety of erecting a chapel suited to the wants of the neighbourhood became evident. Oldham Road Chapel was consequently built and opened last October [Should be September, 1850.]. The congregation continuing to increase, and Mr. Bedell's ministry proving highly useful, it appeared to the friends and ministers, at Manchester especially, interested in the undertaking to be expedient that a church should be formed, and that the whole management of the interest should be confided to its trust. Accordingly a church was formed on the 20th March [1851], consisting of from seventy to eighty members, who unanimously agreed to invite Mr. Bedell to become their pastor. A considerable increase to the number of the communicants is expected shortly. The schools are flourishing, and the teachers active, intelligent, and united.¹

¹ Page 281. To the above account one or two items of interest may be added. In the obituary of the Rev. John Jones ("Congregational Year Book" for 1851), formerly of Hindley and Horwich, it is recorded that he removed to Manchester from the latter place "determining to break up fresh ground," and that he opened a large room in Poland Street, out of which the Oldham Road Church grew. This does not appear to be strictly accurate, for the room in Poland Street had been vacated by Mr. Jones before the commencement of services therein by students, in which the Oldham Road Church had its proper origin. Then in the memoir of the Rev. J. L. Poore, of Hope Chapel, Salford (p. 265), the Oldham Road Church is named as one of his "pets," which he was "active in originating." Further, the Church Book of Grosvenor Street Chapel, under date February, 1851, says that "twelve members were dismissed in order that they might, in conjunction with others, form a Congregational Church in the new chapel in Oldham Road." Until the formation of the church any friends wishing to unite in fellowship were temporarily admitted members of the Grosvenor Street Church.

The Rev. James Bedell, the first minister, in some interesting reminiscences supplies more accurate data respecting the church's origin than is contained in the foregoing extract. "In Mr. Abraham Ward's office in Deansgate," says Mr. Bedell, "he and three of us from the college met for consultation and earnest prayer concerning the beginning of a school and preaching room in Oldham Road. Then on a dark winter's morning, January 18th, 1846, three students, Messrs. Day, Clapham, and myself, walked from the college to Poland Street, and in the upper room, quietly, unostentatiously, began a Sunday School." Service was held in the evening, and in September of the same year Sunday morning preaching was commenced. In the summer of 1848 Mr. Bedell, who had been connected with the interest from the beginning, with the sanction of the College Professors, undertook to supply the pulpit regularly for twelve months. "During the autumn," says the Church Book, "the little chapel became quite full. The congregation in the evenings numbered 200. At the Thursday evening prayer meeting there were 80 present. The scholars in attendance numbered from 360 to 400. On the school register there were 530 names. There were about 50 Church members, of whom 25 had professed their faith in Christ since they worshipped in the place." The foundation stone of the present chapel, towards which the trustees of Mosley Street Chapel gave £1000, was laid in November, 1849, by James Carlton, Esq., and on the 4th of September in the following year it was opened with sermons by the Revs. Dr. Raffles and James Parsons. On March 15th, 1851, the church was formed, seventy persons entering into fellowship, and Mr. Bedell was at once invited to the pastorate. The invitation was accepted, and on Tuesday, March 25th following, he was ordained, Dr. Vaughan, President of the college, giving him the charge. Mr. Bedell continued a ministry of much efficiency until September, 1876, when he resigned. Subsequently he became pastor of the Congregational Church at Lymm, in Cheshire, where he is now resident without charge. The Rev. Wm. Hubbard, a Methodist Free Church minister, from Blackburn, was appointed Mr. Bedell's successor early in 1877. He laboured with much acceptance until 1885, when he removed to Ipswich, where he is still the minister.

The present pastor is the Rev. W. H. Towers, from Carnforth, who entered upon his duties here, September 12th, 1886.¹ The chapel has sitting accommodation for over 1,000 persons.

In 1824 a few members of the Grosvenor Street Congregational Church, prominent amongst them being Mr. Jonathan Lees, opened a Sunday School in Blakeley Street, now Charter Street. In the space of two years the place was quite inadequate to accommodate the numbers attending, and efforts were made to secure funds towards the erection of more suitable premises. The following is a copy of the appeal in support of the movement issued by Mr. Roby, the minister of Grosvenor Street Church :—

The teachers of the Sunday School connected with Grosvenor Street Chapel, Manchester, compassionating the deplorable and neglected state of the population between the lower part of Miller's Lane and the Town have for several years past conducted a Sunday School there. The encouraging prospect, in most inconvenient premises, has long urged the necessity of erecting a building for the more commodious prosecution of the design. A piece of ground has been purchased on which a school is intended to be built as soon as funds for the purpose can be collected. The estimate of expense is from £500 to £600. The premises are already vested in trust for the purpose specified, and liberal contributions are recommended by

W. ROBY.

On November 4th, 1827, this building, one storey high, was opened as a Sunday School and preaching room, on which occasion "150 scholars with their superintendent, secretary, and teachers formed the procession from the old to the new premises." In the evening Mr. Roby preached from Deut. xxxi. 12, 13, and it is recorded that at the conclusion of the "impressive and memorable" service, the children in the gallery were so delighted with the opening of their new house that they involuntarily broke out with

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The work continued to grow until greater accommodation again became necessary, and in March, 1846, the present structure was erected at a cost of about £1,850. The Rev. Wm. Palmer, who had previously laboured at Hawes, Northallerton, and Peterborough, was the first pastor, commencing his duties as such in

¹ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

1852. At the close of 1855 he removed to Woodbridge, in Suffolk, where he died July 8th, 1858, aged fifty-eight years. In September, 1856, the church, which hitherto had been a branch of Grosvenor Street Church, became independent, though the somewhat curious fact is that the school continued to retain its connection with the parent church until 1879. The Rev. T. Lawson, born at Preston and educated at Lancashire College, settled at Ashley Lane on the completion of his college course, beginning his duties on the first Sunday in January, 1858. In November, 1859, he removed to Bacup, "where he became distinguished for his skill in public debates, meeting amongst others the late Mr Charles Bradlaugh." Mr. Lawson died suddenly, August 24th, 1892, being at the time the respected minister of the Congregational Church at West Hartlepool where he had laboured for more than a quarter of a century. Towards the end of 1863 the Rev. T. Chambers, a student from Cavendish College, Manchester, accepted an invitation to the pastorate. He resigned in April, 1866, and subsequently held a brief pastorate at Thorne, in Yorkshire. No successor was appointed until 1879, when the Rev. Thomas Wigley, formerly a Primitive Methodist minister, took charge of the church, and is still the pastor. The chapel has sitting accommodation for 350 persons. Connected with the church are at least two honourable names which ought to be mentioned—the late Alderman George Booth, J.P., and his brother, the late Mr. Hugh Booth. For half a century both of them filled its leading offices, and, setting aside the charms of suburban residence, deliberately chose to live in the city that they might render more effective service to the cause at Ashley Lane.

X.—HARPURHEY, QUEEN'S PARK, AND NEWTON HEATH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

HARPURHEY, formerly a separate township some two miles north-east of Manchester, but now a part of the great city, has been the home of Congregational effort for considerably over half a century. It grew out of the "pioneer work" of some of the friends associated with Ashley Lane Sunday School, who were

wishful to extend their usefulness. Some seventeen were told off for the purpose, amongst them being the late Mr. Abraham Ward, and a cottage in Drinkwater Street was the place where public worship was held, and a Sunday School was conducted. At the annual meeting of the Lancashire Congregational Union in April, 1839, a grant was made towards the preaching of the gospel here, where a church already existed, having been formed about 1833, consisting of eighteen members. The Rev. James Dunkley is mentioned as the first minister, about whom I have no information.¹ In 1849 the Rev. Mr. Joseph is named as minister, but he remained only a short time. The Rev. Edward Henry Weeks, who had been educated at Cheshunt College, and who had previously laboured about twelve years at Dewsbury, became the pastor in 1855. In 1864 he accepted an invitation to form a fourth Congregational church at Dewsbury and become its minister. Failing health compelled him to resign in the spring of 1871, and he retired to Scarborough, where he died January 19th, 1872, aged fifty-six years. The Rev. J. Earnshaw was the next minister. He had been educated at Homerton College, and had held pastorates at Bowdon, Attercliffe, and Pickering. He removed in 1863 from the latter place to Harpurhey, "where he had resident pupils," and in the following year he took charge of the church. In 1869 he resigned, and spent the remainder of his life "in teaching and preaching whenever opportunity offered."² He died at Cheetham Hill, July 17th, 1876, aged sixty-nine years. The Rev. W. S. Davies followed in 1870, and resigned in 1878, being succeeded by the Rev. J. W. Thomason, from the Pastors' College, in 1879, who is still the minister of the church. The present chapel, erected in 1854, has accommodation for 700 persons, and there is a large Sunday School associated with it where 600 can be taught. The church is a "Union Church," and may be served either by a Baptist or Congregational minister, both forms of baptism being recognised.

The Rev. Robert Mitchell, at the time associated with Dr.

¹ I regret that the account of Harpurhey is not so complete as could be desired, but considerable difficulty has been experienced in obtaining even the information here given.

² "Congregational Year Book" for 1877, p. 356.

Morrison in the pastorate of the E. U. Church at Dundas Street, Glasgow, accepted an invitation to become the minister of the newly formed church at Queen's Park. The church originated in a secession of a number of persons from the Union Church, Harpurhey, who established the new cause upon the principles of the Evangelical Union of Scotland. Contrary to usual custom the commencement of Mr. Mitchell's ministry in Manchester was made the occasion of a presentation to him. On August 10th, 1868, at a soir e, held to welcome him, P. Spence, Esq., in the chair, he received "an address and a purse of sovereigns." The congregation, which worshipped in the iron building formerly in use at Patricroft, rapidly grew, and in 1869 commodious school premises were erected at a cost of about £1,200. In 1875 a more permanent sanctuary became necessary, and on Saturday, November 25th of that year, Richard Johnson, Esq., J.P., laid the foundation stone of the present handsome structure. "On the previous Saturday," it is recorded, "the pastor, the Rev. Robert Mitchell, had met the children of the congregation, when each in turn took the trowel and laid a brick in the building, for which privilege they each paid half a crown to the building fund."¹ The cost of the church was about £7,000. The opening services took place on Thursday, November 2nd, 1876, when Dr. Thomson, preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. William Hubbard in the evening. On the following Sunday, November 5th, the preacher was the Rev. Fergus Ferguson, D.D., of Glasgow. Soon after the erection of the church trade depression set in, "which was felt perhaps in few churches more acutely than in that at Queen's Park." The debt, therefore, became "a most serious burden," and at the close of 1881 Mr. Mitchell's health being "seriously impaired," he felt compelled to resign his charge. Subsequently he became pastor of the Chorlton-cum-Hardy Congregational Church, and died at the Hydropathic Establishment, East Kilbride, May 5th, 1893, aged sixty-six years.² In 1882 the Rev. E. E. Stuttard, educated at Chesnut College, and who had formerly laboured twelve years at St. Neots, Hunts, received and accepted an invitation to become their

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1876, p. 40.

² Vide ante p. 73.

minister, his recognition service being held on Friday, November 10th, of that year. In the spring of the following year a bazaar was held to support Mr. James Bryson, the church secretary, who had courageously undertaken the liquidation of the heavy debt of £3,300 which still rested upon the building. The bazaar realised the sum of £1,078 15s. 8d., and Mr. Bryson's efforts in collecting subscriptions £2,287 10s., thus setting the friends free. The church has accommodation for about 1,100, and Mr. Stuttard pursues his ministry here with much acceptance. During the pastorate of Mr. Mitchell the church was associated with the Evangelical Union of Scotland; but the trust deed gives power to a majority of the church to make the property Congregational, and since the commencement of Mr. Stuttard's ministry the church has been connected with the Congregational Union.

At Newton Heath, just within the borough boundary, a Congregational interest was begun in October, 1882, by the Ministers and Deacons' Association of Salford. Services were held in a small room over the local Co-operative Stores, and for a time the pulpit was supplied mainly by members of the Lay Preachers' Association, the Sunday School being superintended, first by the Rev. W. H. Drewett, and subsequently by Mr. G. Lowe. In June, 1885, the Queen's Park Church was invited by the County Union to take charge of the station, and, encouraged by the promise of pecuniary assistance, consented to do so. Success continued to attend the movement, and in 1893 a new school chapel was erected in Thorp Road, the foundation stone of which had been laid on October 8th of the previous year by Samuel Lamb, Esq., of Heaton Mersey, formerly a resident of North Manchester. The opening services began on Thursday evening, April 20th, when the Rev. Samuel Pearson, M.A., was the preacher, the Rev. J. R. Murray, M.A., taking the first part of the service. The services were continued on the three following Sundays, the Revs. T. Willis, James McDougall, D. W. Vaughan, M.A., W. H. Towers, Dr. Hodgson, E. E. Stuttard, and Mr. George Lowe preaching on different occasions. The cost of the building, which offers accommodation for about 300 worshippers, including the site, is about £2,000, towards which the Lancashire and Cheshire Chapel Building Society promised £400. In addition to this the

English Chapel Building Society has promised the sum of £150, being the proceeds of the sale of the hall in Collyhurst Street, formerly in use for Congregational purposes. A branch church has been formed, and the Queen's Park Church still exercises a helpful supervision over the interest.

XI.—CHEETHAM HILL, BROUGHTON, BROUGHTON PARK,
AND HIGHTOWN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

IN 1851 the Rev. John Lockwood, B.A., whose ministerial training was received at Rotherham College, removed from Tavistock, where he had for several years been co-pastor with the Rev. S. Rooker, to Manchester, "to endeavour to raise a new church at Cheetham Hill." Services were held for a few years in a room in 'Tyson Street, and next in Humphrey Street, the first generous supporters and workers being Mr. William Johnson and Mr. Goodwin. A church was formed in 1853, and in the same year the present commodious building was opened for public worship by Dr. Raffles. The cost of the building, including the land, was considerably over £4,000, and the sitting capacity is for about 660 persons. When the chapel was built, Cheetham Hill is described as a "pleasant and rapidly rising suburb, which hitherto has had no Dissenting chapel;" and the ground in front of the chapel, it is said, "will be planted with evergreens, and arranged with a carriage drive on each side."¹ "The health of his wife having failed, and his home being darkened by her removal," Mr. Lockwood resigned in 1856. Subsequently he held pastorates at Oswestry and Parkstone, near Poole. His death at Bideford took place September 25th, 1888, at the age of seventy-four years. His successor was the Rev. J. A. Picton, M.A., a student from Lancashire College, who settled in 1856. After a useful ministry of seven years he removed to Leicester. Mr. Picton retired from the ministry some years ago, and is now M.P. for Leicester. The late Sir J. A. Picton, of Liverpool, was his father, whose literary works are well known to students of local history and archæology.

¹ "Congregational Year Book," for 1854, p. 278.

The Rev. G. W. Conder was the next to accept the pastorate of the church. He was born at Hitchin, November 30th, 1821, and studied for the ministry under Prof. Godwin, at Highbury College. Previous to his settlement at Manchester he held a co-pastorate at High Wycombe, and pastored at Ryde and Leeds. Along with the Revs. Dr. Reynolds and William Guest, he compiled the Leeds Hymn Book, which is still in use at Cheetham Hill and in some other of our churches. His "multiplied labours" at Leeds proved too heavy a tax upon his strength, and in 1864 he accepted the charge of the Cheetham Hill Church. In 1869 he was called to the Chair of the Lancashire Congregational Union, and in November, 1870, the condition of his health led him to accept the invitation of the Queen's Road Church, Forest Hill, London, where he might breathe "a more genial air." Here he died, November 8th, 1874. The Rev. Thomas Hamer, educated at Lancashire College, and for a short time assistant minister at Dundee, followed in 1871, and continued his acceptable labours until 1884, when he resigned. He is now the pastor of the Congregational Church at Little Lever, near Bolton.¹ The Rev. P. T. Forsyth, M.A., educated at New College, after a brief settlement at Hackney, succeeded Mr. Hamer in 1885. To the regret of his congregation he removed to Clarendon Park, Leicester, in 1888, where he still ministers. Mr. Forsyth's recent contributions to theological discussion have excited considerable interest, and marked him out for a prominent position in the theological world of the future. The Rev. D. W. Vaughan, M.A., a student from the Yorkshire United College, followed Mr. Forsyth in 1889, and is still the pastor of the church. "During my ministry," says he, "the most important event has been the closing of Park Chapel, and the transfer of about forty members to our church at Cheetham Hill."

The Congregational Church at Higher Broughton arose much in the same way and at the same time as the one at Cheetham Hill. In 1852 the Rev. Joseph Muncaster, who had been educated at Rotherham College, and had previously laboured a few years at Gainsborough, was invited to take charge of a small church here. The congregation and school first met in a room over Valentine Ashton's stables, in Hilton Street, Higher Broughton. Then a school

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity.

was built on the present site of the church. In 1857 "a handsome structure, in the Middle Pointed style of English architecture usually called Decorated Gothic," was erected for the congregation. The accommodation was for 900 persons, and the cost was about £3,000. A serious accident occurred during its erection, on September 24th, 1856, the spire falling and doing damage to the extent of £1,000. Mr. Muncaster's ministry extended over twenty years, and the cause of its termination is given in the following passage :—

He was visiting in London. Driving out one day with his host he was thrown from the carriage on to his head. For fifteen days consciousness did not return. His life hung on a thread. On his recovery it became clear to himself that the vigorous and happy work of the Broughton Church could not be resumed by him with satisfaction to himself.¹

He resigned therefore in the early part of 1874, and at a meeting, over which Dr. McKerrow, "the oldest Nonconformist minister of Manchester," presided, he received amongst other gifts a purse of gold containing £300. Subsequently the Dowager Lady Crossley, of Somerleyton Hall, Lowestoft, offered him, "with the concurrence of the congregation, the pulpit of the chapel in the grounds of Somerleyton Hall." He accepted the position, and held it until his death, which occurred on October 28th, 1888, aged sixty-six years. The Rev. Stuart J. Reid, a student from Cheshunt College, followed in 1875, and after five years removed to Wilmslow in Cheshire. After a brief pastorate there, he withdrew from the ministry, and engaged in literary work. The present pastor is the Rev. James McDougall, who had previously exercised a vigorous and useful ministry at Darwen. He began his labours at Broughton in 1880. The character of the neighbourhood has changed very considerably since the erection of the chapel thirty-six years ago. The population, always migratory, is becoming increasingly Jewish, and so the difficulty to maintain the church in its vigour grows. Mr. McDougall's courageous efforts, however, have not been in vain.² During his pastorate the tower has

¹ "Congregational Year Book" for 1889, p. 203.

² Vide vol. ii of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for additional particulars respecting Mr. McDougall.

been rebuilt, the whole structure renovated, and in 1889 new Sunday School buildings were erected, the memorial stone being laid on the 6th of July of that year by Mr. William Mather, M.P., whose brother, Mr. John Mather, is a deacon of the church.

Broughton Park Congregational Church "is situated on a naturally commanding position in the Park, bounded on three sides by the Park drives, from each of which the building is approached, and on the fourth by houses and land," contiguous to Bury Old Road. At the west end of the south aisle the tower and spire rise to the height of nearly two hundred feet. The sitting accommodation is for 650 persons; the cost was over £20,000, towards which the Chapel Building Society granted the sum of £1,000. The building was opened for public worship in 1874. The church was formed in 1875, a considerable number of members being dismissed from the Richmond Congregational Church for the purpose, amongst whom were some of that church's "wealthiest supporters." The first pastor was the Rev. C. S. Slater, M.A. Educated at Spring Hill College, minister of Addison Street Church, Nottingham, from 1868 to 1876, in the latter year he settled at Broughton Park. In 1883 he accepted an invitation to the Sherwell Congregational Church, Plymouth, where he still labours. The Rev. H. E. Radbourne, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, was invited to succeed Mr. Slater in 1885. The invitation was accepted, and he held the pastorate until 1891. when he became the minister of the Pendleton Congregational Church, where he still labours.¹ The present minister is the Rev. Samuel Pearson, M.A, formerly of Birmingham, then of Great George Street, Liverpool, and next of Highbury Quadrant, London. He began his duties in his present sphere in January, 1892, which he continues amidst many signs of encouragement.² In connection with the church there is a Sunday School, meeting in a separate Gothic building at the Cheetham Hill gate of the park. Rooden Lane is a branch church, and derives much of its support from Broughton Park.³

¹ Vide p. 227.

² Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for further particulars respecting Mr. Pearson.

³ Vide ante p. 27.

Hightown Congregational Church was formerly the Hewitt Street Mission, commenced by the Park Church, Cheetham, in 1876, during the pastorate of the Rev. F. Carter. In 1885 the friends of Park Church, the "weakest" in the neighbourhood, felt themselves "unable to bear any longer the responsibility of carrying on this mission," and the Higher Broughton Church was induced to undertake its management. "Formerly," says the "Lancashire Congregational Calendar" for 1888, "two cottages were used, the larger for worship and a senior school, the smaller for infants. The arrangement was costly and inconvenient. The owner of the property having acceded to a proposal to rebuild the larger house, extending and elevating it, there is now an excellent, well-lighted, well-heated meeting place and schoolroom, and a lower room suitable for classes. On the first Sunday in January [1888] services were conducted in what will be known as the New Congregational Hall, Hightown, and there is every prospect of greatly increased numbers and usefulness." A church was formed in the same year. The pulpit is supplied mainly by lay preachers and students from the Lancashire College, the Rev. James McDougall acting as superintendent. The sitting accommodation is for 170 persons.

XII.—A CHAPTER OF FRAGMENTS.

BEFORE leaving the story of Manchester Congregationalism, it is proposed in this chapter to gather up and present unto the reader a number of particulars whose omission would be a serious defect. I regret that space will not permit more than a few sentences to what would make, and deserves, a goodly volume. First in order may be taken those Congregational interests either now extinct, or which have been so modified in their character as to cease to be called churches.

In 1838 a room in Cable Street, which had formerly been a cholera hospital, was opened for public worship by the Revs. Dr. McAll and R. Fletcher. "The gracious scheme originated amongst a few Christians, who met in the counting-house of the late devoted servant of God, Mr. Stephen Sheldon," and the Rev. E. H. Nolan was appointed minister. Dr. Nolan—as subsequently

he became—had been trained at Dublin, and was for some years Secretary of the Irish Evangelical Society, a position which failing health compelled him to relinquish. Shortly after his settlement in Manchester, in 1838, a church was formed, consisting of nine members from Grosvenor Street and Mosley Street Congregational Churches, and the congregation increased so rapidly that enlarged premises became necessary. The handsome structure in York Street, called Ducie Chapel, was therefore erected at a cost of about £4,000, with accommodation for 1,000 persons, and “containing 300 sittings for the poor.” The opening services took place on Wednesday, May 6th, and Sunday, May 10th, 1840, when the preacher on the first day was the Rev. William Jay, of Bath; and on the second day the preachers were Dr. Reed, of London, in the morning, and the Rev. J. Campbell, also of London, afternoon and evening. It is recorded that the “glorious voluntary principle” had a “signal triumph” on the occasion, for “the unprecedented and enormous sum of nearly £600” was raised after the sermons. At the time of its erection the chapel was quite suburban, green fields behind it extending to Strangeways Hall, whose proprietor, the Earl of Ducie, was Mr. Jay’s personal friend. Dr. Nolan attracted large congregations for many years, but a deep cloud rests upon the close of his ministry. He resigned in 1853, and for twelve months the chapel was closed. In the following year a new beginning was made, the building was re-opened under the name of Park Chapel, and in July, 1855, the Rev. John Brown, B.A., a student from Lancashire College, became the minister. After nine years of useful labour, Dr. Brown (for such he has since become) removed to Bunyan Chapel, Bedford, where he still lives in the affections of his people. His work on John Bunyan, whose pulpit he occupies, is a noble monument of patient and earnest research, and his two addresses from the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in 1891, are an able defence of the Congregational position; whilst in all matters pertaining to Congregational history he is recognised as a very high authority. The Rev. J. Emmett Jones, a student from New College, followed in 1864. During his pastorate a lecture-room was built on ground adjacent to the chapel. In 1871 he removed to Huddersfield, and subsequently to St. Paul’s

Chapel, Wigan,¹ where he died January 31st, 1876. The Rev. F. Carter, from Tottington,² near Bury, and now of Northwich, held the pastorate from 1871 to 1880. With him originated the branch school in Hewitt Street, in 1876, now the Hightown Congregational Church. The last minister was the Rev. F. Moore, a student from Lancashire College, who bravely struggled amidst discouraging circumstances to bring back to the church its former prosperity. He had charge of the place from 1881 to 1886, resigning in the latter year on his acceptance of an invitation to Aston Park, Birmingham, where he still labours. Mr. Moore conducted closing services on Sunday, March 16th, 1890, and on the evening of the following day a farewell meeting of old friends and members was held. Most of the families associated themselves with the Congregational Church at Cheetham Hill, and Park Church became extinct, the building being subsequently sold to Messrs. Edmondson and Young for £1,500.³

Knott Mill Congregational Chapel was erected in 1853, with accommodation for 1,000 people. The church was formed the following year, and the Rev. J. L. Poore, on revisiting Hope Chapel, Salford, in 1858, called Knott Mill one of his "pets," which was prospering, the school having 700 scholars in attendance. The first and only pastor was the Rev. John Rawlinson. He was sent to the Blackburn Academy to be educated for the ministry from the Cannon Street Church, Preston, being transferred to the Lancashire College on the removal of the Academy to Manchester. His first settlement was at Stainland, in Yorkshire, whence he removed to Cheltenham. In 1854 he accepted the charge of the infant church at Knott Mill. After a long and faithful ministry, Mr. Rawlinson resigned in 1887, retiring also from active service. He is still resident in Manchester. As in many other cases, the character of the neighbourhood had so changed during the forty years of the church's existence, that it became evident it would be impossible to continue it on the old lines after Mr. Rawlinson's retirement. As the Knott Mill Hall,

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ The information above given is largely taken from a pamphlet by Mr. A. Porter, published in connection with the closing services of Park Church.

the place is now worked by the Manchester and Salford Congregational Mission Board.

Higher Ardwick Congregational Church.—Of this nothing is known beyond the fact that in 1813 twenty-three of its members were received into the fellowship of the Grosvenor Street Church. The Rev. Wm. Marsh, formerly of Cannon Street,¹ had been minister, and on his removal to Charlesworth the church was scattered and broken. Probably it was only a very temporary secession from Cannon Street.

Collyhurst Street Congregational Church existed from about 1862 to 1885, and at certain points in its history presented considerable promise. The pastors have been:—1862-1867, Rev. John Morgan,² removed to Pentonville; 1868-1870, Rev. W. Axford, removed to Peasley Cross;³ 1871-1872, Rev. R. Solomon, removed to Ancoats;⁴ 1872-1878, members of the Lay Preachers' Association; 1878-1880, Mr. Whaley (Evangelist); 1880-1881, Rev. M. Duffill, removed to Hindley.⁵ Shortly afterwards, Collyhurst Street Church, which had received considerable financial assistance from the County Union, ceased to exist, and the building was sold, the proceeds being afterwards given by the English Chapel Building Society towards the new chapel at Newton Heath.

For a few years there was a Congregational interest at Gorton Brook, of which the Rev. Wm. Haigh was minister in 1856.

The "Tabernacle," in City Road, another of these small interests, had as minister, in 1851, the Rev. Edwin Robinson, probably the person of that name formerly at Lydiate, and subsequently at Ramsbottom.⁶ He was followed by the Rev. John George. Students from Cavendish College had the Tabernacle as a preaching station in 1862, and one of them, the Rev. A. Hall, settled there when the college was closed, and established the church on a Congregational basis. "City Road Congregational Church" was built for Mr. Hall in 1869, the opening services taking

¹ Vide ante p. 123.

² The congregation was gathered by Mr. Morgan.

³ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁴ Vide ante p. 184.

⁵ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁶ Vide vols. iii. and iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

place on July 18th. Here he laboured for several years. "City Road Congregational Church" is now the Russell Street Mission Chapel, in connection with Chorlton Road Church. The Tabernacle is a mission station belonging to the Presbyterians.

Manchester has produced a long and honourable roll of Congregational laymen, who demand a much more lengthy notice than is here possible. Robert Spear, born at Hyde Cross, near Manchester, November 27th, 1762, whose father was a deacon of Cannon Street Chapel, "at a very considerable expenditure" educated a number of excellent Congregational ministers; John Hope, more than fifty years a deacon, and an early Secretary of the County Union (*vide ante* p. 138, note 1); Samuel Fletcher, whose name has frequently appeared in these pages, "the well known excellent deacon of the Grosvenor Street Church, and an eminent county magistrate;" George Hadfield, M.P. for Sheffield for many years, who "risked a large fortune and spent a small one" in defending Nonconformist interests; Sir James Watts, memorials of whose munificence may be seen in many of the most handsome of our Congregational churches; William Armitage, lately deceased, the worthy representative of a family prominent in the annals of local Congregationalism; John Rylands, the millionaire, whose munificent bequests at his death testified how near to him lay, not Congregationalism alone, but religious and philanthropic movements of all kinds; the Haworth brothers, happily still with us, ever in the forefront of generous donors to our denominational institutions; and a great number more, equally generous and good.

Manchester may claim to be the birthplace of the Lancashire Congregational Union, for it was in the vestry of Mosley Street Chapel, September 23rd, 1806, that it was formed. The story of this Union, which is thus rapidly approaching its centenary, would make one of the most thrilling productions of the time, and bring encouragement to many weary workers, because it would show how mighty a force in the religious life of our county Congregationalism has been.¹

¹ In 1840 the Rev. Richard Slate, of Preston, at the request of the Union, published a "Brief History," which is not without value; but more than half a century has gone since then, and these are amongst the most vigorous years of the Union's existence.



MR. ROBERT SPEAR.

Manchester has been, and still is, the home of academical institutions where great numbers of men have been equipped for ministerial service. From 1803 to 1809 the Rev. William Roby presided over an academy which was pecuniarily supported by Mr. Robert Spear. The place of meeting was the vestry of Mosley Street Chapel. The Leaf Square Academy took its rise in 1810, and remained in existence about forty years, having as Presidents the Revs. George Phillips, M.A., John Reynolds, Jenkin Lewis, and Dr. Clunie. Though not a distinctly theological institution, the design of the promoters was to educate "young men for the ministry;" and it was "established for the benefit of the Independent churches in the counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire." With Dr. Clunie it became a private venture school. Lancashire Independent College, at Whalley Range, the *alma mater* of so many whose names appear in this work (the old Blackburn Academy in continuity, where it originated in 1816), was opened in 1843.¹ The present is therefore its Jubilee year, and the event was celebrated by special meetings, June 21-23, when amongst old students taking part in the proceedings were the Revs. Dr. Bruce, Huddersfield; Dr. Brown, Bedford; Dr. Simon, Yorkshire United College; J. G. Rogers, B.A., London; G. S. Barrett, B.A., Norwich; Professor Armitage, M.A., Yorkshire United College; and Professor W. H. Bennett, M.A., Hackney. Its present respected Principal is Dr. Scott, whose father, the Rev. Walter Scott, for many years presided over the Airedale College; and on the professorial staff are Drs. Thomson and Hodgson. Cavendish College was in existence from 1860 to 1863. The idea originated with Dr. Parker then minister of Cavendish Church, and classes were held in the splendid suite of buildings belonging to the chapel. The Rev. J. B. Paton, M.A., of Sheffield, and the Rev. J. R. Thomson, M.A., were associated with the doctor in the professorial arrangements. In 1863 the college was transferred to Nottingham, and the present Congregational Institute there, of which Dr. Paton has been the respected

¹ The foundation stone was laid by Mr. George Hadfield, in September, 1840, whose interest in the college remained unabated until the time of his death.



THE REV. WILLIAM ROBY.

Principal since its commencement, is its representative.¹ The dissolution of the Warrington Academy, in 1786, left the Nonconformists of the North, whose drift was towards Unitarianism, without any training institution for their ministers. To meet this want the Manchester Academy was instituted. It has moved often, and assumed different names, as the following will show :—

Manchester Academy, 1786-1803.

Manchester College, York, 1803-1840.

Manchester New College, Manchester, 1840-1853.

Manchester New College, London, 1853-1889.

Manchester College, Oxford, 1889, to the present time.

This institution, along with the present "Unitarian Home Missionary College," in Manchester, has supplied with ministers many of those old churches (now Unitarian) whose histories are given in this work.

The Congregational Mission Board for Manchester, Salford, and District was formed in the summer of 1891. Its objects are stated in the following paragraph :—

(a) The undertaking of mission work in such churches, halls, and mission-rooms, in Manchester, Salford, and district, as may be placed under the entire control of the Board; and (b) the aiding of Evangelistic work in such other ways as may, from time to time, seem expedient to the Board.

The Board has charge of Knott Mill, Chapel Street, Upper Moss Lane Mission (formerly undenominational, room seats about 150 people), and Beaufort Street (a sort of branch to Knott Mill, which consists of two cottages thrown into one.) Mr. Whitehead is engaged as Evangelist, and the work has grown so considerably that a second agent is about to be appointed. Dr. Hodgson, of Lancashire College, has interested himself deeply in the work of the Board, and has discharged the duties of Secretary since its commencement, Mr. A. A. Haworth acting as Treasurer.

The following account of Welsh Congregationalism in Manchester and Salford, with very slight alterations, has been kindly

¹ Owens College is not a denominational institution, and so does not come within the scope of this work, but students from Lancashire College have for many years obtained a large share of their literary training there.



Messerschmidt

LANCASHIRE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE (Front View).

supplied by the Rev. D. John, the esteemed pastor of Booth Street East (Welsh) Congregational Church :—

CHORLTON ROAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—In the year 1816 the Rev. John Breese, of Liverpool, preached for the first time to a few Congregationalists just arrived from Wales. On October 18th, 1818, a small church of six members was formed by the Rev. William Williams, of Wern, one of the most celebrated preachers of Wales, in a private house in Old Carter Lane (now Portland Street). On this spot now stands Sir James Watts's warehouse. In 1822 they removed from Old Carter Lane to a schoolroom in connection with St. James' Church, which was kindly lent by the clergyman of that church. About two years afterwards another move was made to Old Cloth Hall, Salford, opposite the Cathedral, on the other side of the Irwell. By this time the church had increased to such an extent that they felt they could maintain a pastor, so they invited the Rev. John Griffiths, brother to the late Rev. William Griffiths, of Holyhead. Mr. Griffiths commenced his ministerial duties in October, 1824, on which occasion the Rev. W. Williams, of Wern, officiated. In February, 1826, a site for a chapel was obtained in Gartside Street, in the city. The foundation stone was laid by the Rev. John Breese, of Liverpool, and the Rev. J. A. Coombs, of Chapel Street, Salford, assisted on the occasion. The chapel was opened for public worship Sept. 17th, 1826. Mr. Griffiths remained as pastor of the church until 1831, when he removed to Buckley, Flintshire. In 1836 the Rev. David Morgan, Machynlleth (afterwards Dr. Morgan), became their pastor, and remained so until his removal to Llanfyllin in 1839. In November, 1842, the Rev. David Roberts, of Anglesey (now Dr. Roberts, Wrexham), undertook the pastorate, and continued to work in the place until his removal in 1845. In May, 1846, the Rev. Richard Jones, Sirhowy, followed, and remained until 1865, when he removed to Llanidloes. The next pastor was the Rev. D. Lloyd Jones, now of Patagonia. He commenced his ministry here in May, 1867, and in 1869 removed to Ruthin. In 1870 the present minister, the Rev. Richard Roberts, who was educated at Bala College (now called Bala-Bangor College), commenced his ministry. In 1877 the church felt that Gartside Street was getting unsuitable for them, and they secured a plot of land in Chorlton Road. The new chapel was opened on October 21st, 1877, the Rev. Professor Morgan, of Carmarthen, and Professor Thomas, Bala, being the preachers. The cost was about £3,500, and chief rent £40 per annum. The church is working hard and struggling bravely under a heavy debt, the old chapel being unfortunately still on their hands, waiting for sale.

BOOTH STREET EAST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—In February, 1842, a few friends left the mother church at Gartside Street and met together for worship in a room at Bethel Place, out of Stretford Road, Hulme. The same year they removed from Bethel Place to Great Jackson Street, to the Rev. J. Gwyther's old chapel, which they secured on easy terms. Welsh services were commenced here on June 12th, 1842, when a Mr. E. Roberts (student) preached. On August 7th the church was formed by the Rev

Owen Owens, of Rhesycae, the number of members being eleven. In the year 1845 they invited the Rev. D. Hughes, B.A., of St. Asaph, to become their pastor, and he commenced his duties July 19th, 1846, but he remained only until May, 1847. After him came the Rev. Hugh Hughes (Tegai), of Rhoslan, followed by the Rev. Robert Evans (Trogwy), now of America. During this period the church saw little success, and no doubt this was to be accounted for by the fact that Great Jackson Street was too near the mother church and not central enough for Welsh residents. In view of this it was thought wise to move their tent elsewhere, and the year 1859 saw their removal to the Temperance Hall, Chorlton-on-Medlock, which proved to be a very wise step. In March, 1862, they invited the Rev. T. E. Evans, of Rhosllanerchrugog, to become their minister. In a short time after his settlement his ministry was so blessed that they saw it was their duty to look out for a suitable site for a new chapel which would meet their requirements. In this they were successful, a convenient site being found in Booth Street East. On July 12th, 1862, the foundation stone was laid by Sir James Watts, Manchester, and the chapel was opened in March, 1863, when Dr. Parker and others preached. The pastor's health broke down, however, and he resigned his charge in September, 1865, much to the regret of the church. In 1867 they invited the present minister, the Rev. D. John, of Llanddeusant, Anglesey, who had been educated at Brecon College. He took up his duties on January 3rd, 1868. The chapel and schoolroom were erected at a cost of £3,000, which has been cleared off. Pastor and people are working well together.

QUEEN'S ROAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—Preaching was commenced in a schoolroom off Rochdale Road, in the year 1867, through the efforts of Lewis Jones, now of Pwllheli. He obtained every assistance from the Welsh ministers and students of Manchester. In November, 1868, the church was formed by the Revs. D. Lloyd Jones, D. Davies, D. John, assisted by Messrs. P. Mostyn Williams, Ellis Pugh, John Jones, and others. A few years afterwards they removed to a room in Needwood Street, off Rochdale Road. Finally, they secured a site in Queen's Road, and built a chapel, which was opened on January 13th, 1878. The Rev. Dr. Rees, of Liverpool, and the Rev. D. M. Jenkins, of the same town, preached on the occasion. The chapel cost £1,100. The present debt is £400. Its membership is about fifty, and all of the working class.

LORD DUNCAN STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SALFORD.—On the first Sunday in January, 1876, a mission in connection with Chorlton Road Welsh Church was started in an upper room in West Craven Street, Salford. On April 24th, 1887, the mission was formed into a church, on which occasion the Revs. Richard Roberts and David John took part in the proceedings, sixteen persons entering into fellowship. Owing to the activity of this small band of workers, the upper room soon became inadequate, and they resolved to build a chapel. Their ambition has just been realised in the opening, a few weeks ago (1893), of a small chapel in Lord Duncan Street. Their members now total forty-two. On January 4th, 1891, the Rev. Richard Roberts, of the Chorlton Road Church, undertook extra duties by becoming their pastor.

CHAPTER III.

SALFORD CONGREGATIONALISM.

I.—NEW WINDSOR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

It was near the end of last century that Congregationalism appeared at New Windsor, then a populous village near Manchester, now a part of the sister borough of Salford. Its origin is attributed to Mr. John Joule, resident in the village, "a man distinguished by ardent piety and active benevolence," who, "feeling compassion for his neighbours," erected at his own expense a small place of worship in 1797.¹ The opening service took place on August 23rd, when the Rev. Charles Ely, of Bury, began "with prayer and reading the scriptures;" the Rev. Noah Blackburn, of Delph, "preached the first sermon" from Ps. xciii., 5; the Rev. J. Cockin, of Halifax, preached the "second sermon from Ps. xxvii., 4, and again in the evening from 1 Pet. i., 3, 4, 5;" and the Rev. Wm. Roby gave out the hymns. It is recorded that "the place was quite crowded both morning and evening; and a peculiar unction rested on both preachers and hearers."² The account of these opening services further states:—

With peculiar pleasure we remark that several churches, without any knowledge of each other's design, have been influenced by one spirit, and almost at the same time, to adopt one of the most likely means for accomplishing this benevolent purpose; we mean that of encouraging some of their most steady and promising members to go out on the Lord's Day, and endeavour to instruct the poor and ignorant, wherever they have an opportunity, either by reading sermons or by preaching to them. The meeting house alluded to above will be supplied, generally, on the Sabbath by persons of this description; by some of the members of Cannon Street Chapel,

¹ This Mr. John Joule was, I imagine, the deacon who remained loyal to the minister of Cannon Street Church when the secession took place which led to the formation of Mosley Street Church (vide ante, p. 138.)

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1797, p. 475.

Manchester, who have been requested by the Church to exercise their abilities on the Lord's Day in preaching to their fellow sinners; and by whose means three or four of the neighbouring villages have been regularly supplied, for nearly a year past, with no small acceptance and success.¹

No minister was appointed until about 1802, when the Rev. T. Theodosius, who, in the baptismal register, adds the letters V.D.M. to his name, assumed that position. His ordination took place on July 13th, 1803, when his tutor, the Rev. Jenkin Lewis,² of Wrexham, gave the charge to the pastor from 1 Tim., iv., 16. "The church and congregation were exhorted to prayer for their minister" by the Rev. William Roby. In the evening the Rev. Joseph Sowden, of Bolton, preached; and other parts of the service were taken by the Revs. E. White, of Chester; S. Bradley, of Manchester; and John Ralph, of Liverpool.

Mr. Theodosius did not remain beyond 1804, and he appears as minister at Gornal, in Staffordshire, in 1810. His successor was the Rev. James Mather. Born at Leigh, in 1773, early in life "put to the loom and trained to the occupation of a muslin weaver," removing to Warrington at the age of sixteen, he is described as the life of his companions and the "ring leader and champion in all games of pleasure, sources of amusement, and feats of emulation in the neighbourhood." His conversion was brought about through a sermon which he heard at Duke's Alley, Bolton, from the Rev. Leonard Redmayne. He was educated for the ministry by the Rev. Wm. Roby, and settled at New Windsor in the early part of 1805. After three years he removed to Howard Street, Sheffield; subsequently to Birmingham; and next to Upper Clapton, London, where he laboured for many years. He died in London on the 29th of May, 1840, and was interred in Abney Park Cemetery, the funeral services being conducted by the Revs. J. Blackburn and Dr. Leifchild. The Rev. George Phillips, M.A., was the next minister. He was born at Haverfordwest, November 15th, 1784, and was descended from the Rev.

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1797, p. 475.

² It is interesting to note that Mr. Lewis subsequently became the tutor of the Leaf Square Academy in Manchester (vide ante p. 202), and about 1814 was invited to take charge of the New Windsor Church, but the invitation was declined.

Peregrine Phillips, an eminent Nonconformist divine who suffered ejection in 1662. In 1801 he entered the Wymondley Academy, and subsequently graduated at Glasgow University. On the completion of his college course he supplied for a time at Liverpool, Haverfordwest, Kidderminster, and Southampton, and in June, 1810, was invited to the position of Classical Tutor in the "Lancashire Independent Academy," recently established at Leaf Square, Manchester. The invitation was accepted, and Mr. Phillips took up his residence at the academy, whilst the celebrated Mr. J. Dalton superintended the Mathematical and Philosophical department. Shortly afterwards the New Windsor Church presented a unanimous call to Mr. Phillips to undertake the pastorate, and this additional responsibility he assumed towards the close of 1810. "Before he had preached six months," says his biographer, "the seats were all taken; several respectable families residing there, who had been in the habit of attending places of worship in Manchester, chose to sit under his ministry; others, who had not regularly attended anywhere, became constant hearers; and the congregation was so much increased as to render an enlargement of the building necessary."¹ His ordination took place on May 29th, 1811, when the Revs. Joseph Fletcher, M.A., of Blackburn; W. Evans, of Stockport; W. Roby, of Manchester; and S. Bradley, of Manchester, conducted the service. A few weeks after his health appeared "to undergo a serious alteration. The united labours of the academy and the pastoral office were more than his constitution was able to support; and he rapidly sank into such a state of debility as to require an entire suspension of his usual employments." On the 17th of October, 1811, in company with Mrs. Phillips, he left Manchester, intending to travel by easy stages to Sidmouth. He died at Glastonbury on the 24th of that month, "the same year in which he was ordained, leaving a widow, to whom he had been united about four months, in a situation not easy to be conceived or described." His funeral sermon was preached at New Windsor Chapel, November 10th, 1811, by his intimate friend, Mr. Fletcher, of Blackburn, from 1 Cor. xv., 26, and was afterwards published under the title of "The Last Enemy

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1819, p. 180.

Destroyed." The next minister was the Rev. John Reynolds, who was born at Hampstead, June 11th, 1782, and was the third son of Dr. Henry Revell Reynolds, "a distinguished physician in the court of George III., and who for many years filled the office of physician in ordinary to his Majesty." On completing his education at Oxford he accepted a Government appointment, and for some years was occupied both in the War Office and in the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department, and as Private Secretary to the Duke of Portland. His conversion was brought about through the preaching of Dr. Mason, of New York, where Mr. Reynolds resided for some time, and he resolved to devote himself to the Christian ministry, attending for a considerable period Dr. Mason's theological lectures. On his return to England in 1811 he put aside "temptations of the strongest kind" to enter the Established Church, and elected to serve amongst the Congregationalists. In the early part of 1812 he accepted the position of Principal to the Leaf Square Academy in succession to Mr. Phillips, and on July 29th of the same year was ordained pastor over the New Windsor Church. His success as a preacher led to his removal to Chester in October, 1813. Subsequently he held pastorates at Romsey, in Hampshire, and Halstead, in Essex. He died February 15th, 1862, at the house of his second son, Dr. Reynolds, of Grosvenor Street, London. His second wife was the only sister of Dr. Fletcher, of Stepney, and formerly of Blackburn. She was the "sharer of his every thought and sorrow, his help-meet in the church, the mother of all his children, and the object to the last of his tenderest affection."¹ In 1843 Mr. Reynolds was elected to the Presidency of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. His biographer says:—

He was at home in the English Court and familiar with the American Camp Meeting; he once assisted to quell a riot in London streets at the head of a brigade of volunteers; but put forth all the strength of his best years as the village evangelist and dissenting pastor.

The Rev. John Clunie, M.A., LL.D., conducted the Leaf Square and Seedley Grove Academies for nearly a quarter of a century. He followed the Rev. Jenkin Lewis (*vide ante* p. 202), and for a

¹ "Congregational Year Book" for 1863, p. 258.

short time, like his predecessors, appears to have discharged the duties of minister to the New Windsor Congregation. As Dr. Clunie was a prominent figure in Manchester Congregational life for nearly half a century, a few further notes about him will be acceptable. He was born in London, April 9th, 1784, educated at Hoxton Academy, graduated in Glasgow University, ordained at Guildford in September, 1809, and for about two years was private tutor to a gentleman's family at Kensington. Thence he removed to Manchester, and in 1837, having acquired a competency, "relinquished the scholastic profession." A bank failure in 1842 involved him with many others in serious difficulty, but his friends rallied round him and placed him in circumstances of comfort. Removing to Ardwick, he associates himself with Grosvenor Street Chapel, serving the churches and the denomination as opportunity offered until his death on June 23rd, 1858. He was the author of "A Scripture Diary," "The Path of Life," "The Storm Improved," and various other sermons. The next in the ministerial roll is the Rev. James Pridie, a native of Oxford, and brought up in the principles of the Established Church, but, removing to Manchester, he came under the influence of the Rev. William Roby, and eventually joined his church. Encouraged by his pastor to seek the Christian ministry, to prepare himself in some measure for its duties, he accepted the position of junior master in the Leaf Square Academy. After spending three years there he placed himself under Mr. Roby for his theological course, and in 1814 settled at Malpas, in Cheshire, preaching also at Boughton. In 1816 he removed to New Windsor, where he was ordained on September 25th, when Mr. Roby gave him the charge from Titus ii., 15. In June, 1829, Mr. Pridie became the minister of Sion Chapel, Halifax, where he laboured many years. He died at Halifax, January 25th, 1873, aged eighty-seven years. The Rev. George Taylor was Mr. Pridie's successor. He was born in Birmingham, February 10th, 1804, educated at Highbury College, and began his labours at New Windsor on the second Sunday in December, 1829. His ordination took place on March 31st, 1830, when his pastor, the Rev. Timothy East, of Birmingham, gave him the charge, the Rev. J. Ely, of Rochdale, preaching in the evening to the people. His

pastorate, which had been attended with many difficulties, was brought to a conclusion in 1837, and eventually he settled at Wellingborough. He died at Birmingham in 1846. In June, 1839, the Rev. Alfred John Morris, from Warrington, undertook the pastoral charge in succession to Mr. Taylor. He remained until 1842, and afterwards laboured at Holloway and Bowdor.¹ His successor was the Rev. T. G. Lee, who had been a Wesleyan minister, but who, during his residence in Manchester as such, "became favourably impressed with the Congregational system of church government, and shortly afterwards established a church on that basis in Chorlton-upon-Medlock Town Hall."² Thence he removed to New Windsor, being recognised as pastor on Wednesday evening, January 18th, 1843. Here he continued until 1877, when he resigned, dying on the 25th of September, 1881, aged eighty years. The Rev. P. R. Berry, from Fleetwood,³ held the pastorate from 1877 to July, 1884, and was followed in 1886 by the Rev. Wm. Briddon, a student from Lancashire College. He left in March, 1890, and is now resident in Salford without charge. The present minister is the Rev. T. C. London, of the Liverpool College and a pupil of the late Dr. George Butler, Canon of Winchester. He has been in charge of the church since April, 1890.

II.—CHAPEL STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

IN the *Evangelical Magazine* for 1817 appears the following account of the origin of the second Congregational Church in Salford:—

May 30, 1817. A large and commodious room (formerly the Cloth Hall) in Greengate, Salford, was opened for divine worship by three sermons, by Messrs. Roby, Smith, and Bradley. Seats to accommodate 230 persons are provided almost gratuitously, for the convenience of a poor neighbourhood. On the following Sabbath a Sunday School was opened in connection with

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² "Congregational Year Book" for 1882, p. 313.

³ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

the above place; and we have the pleasure to hear that from 350 to 400 children stately attend, on which account the committee have been obliged to engage another room for them. We understand also that the Public worship continues to be well attended, Mr. Coombs, from Hoxton Academy, being at present the supply.¹

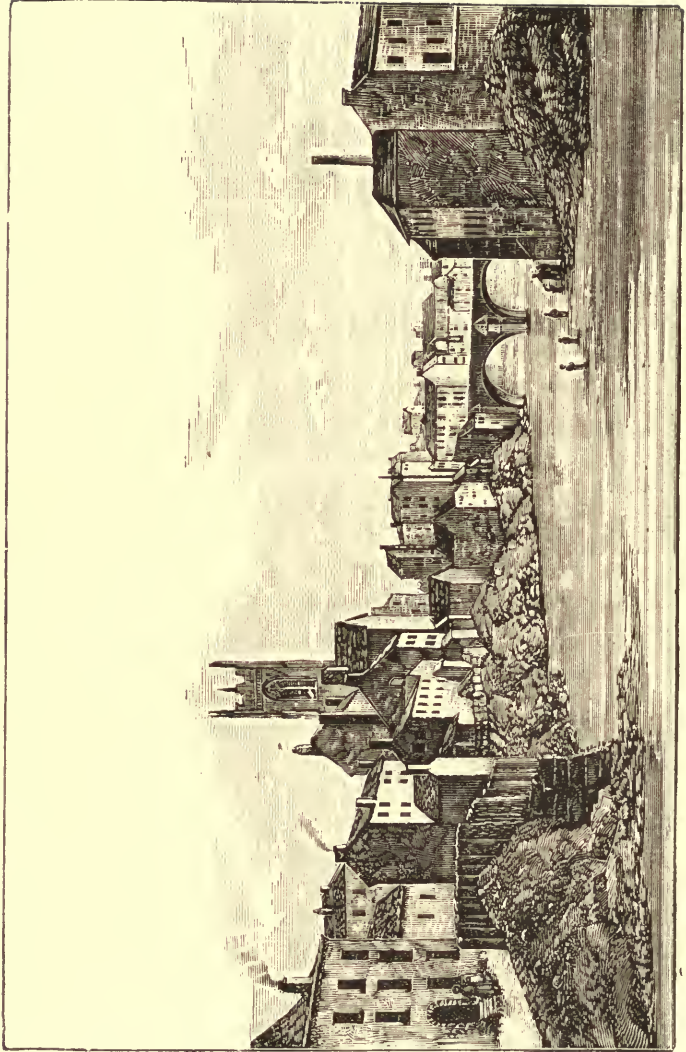
The Cloth Hall in which worship was held was just across the Irwell, near the Old Bridge, now Victoria Bridge. On the 22nd of September, 1818, the Rev. J. A. Coombs, mentioned in the preceding passage as a supply, but who was now pastor of the church, laid the foundation stone of Chapel Street Chapel. The building was opened for public worship on the 28th of July following, when the preachers were the Revs. Dr. Harris, of Hoxton, and Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, their texts being Ps. lxxxiv., 1, and 1 Cor., xiii., 9, respectively. Mr. Coombs was ordained January 26th, 1820, when the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, M.A., of Blackburn, "in a luminous and convincing discourse, stated and defended the reasons of dissent and the principles of Independency." Dr. Winter, of London, "delivered an affectionate and impressive charge founded on Luke xix., 13;" the Rev. William Roby "offered solemn and fervent prayer for a blessing on the relation;" and Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, "eloquently addressed the church and congregation from 1 Thess. v., 12 and 13." Mr. Coombs remained "the zealous, the indefatigable, and beloved pastor of the increasing church" until August, 1838, when he resigned under "circumstances of a very painful nature." He retired to Ambleside, where he founded a Congregational church unto which he ministered several years.³

In the early part of 1839 the Rev. James Hill became his successor. He was born at Stafford, May 17th, 1795, educated at Gosport, and on the completion of his college course proceeded to India as a Missionary. Compelled, on account of ill health, to return to England in 1834, he settled at Oxford, whence he removed to Salford. After a ministry of two years he removed to Clapham, and subsequently to Brighton. He died January 12th, 1870. In 1860 he officiated as Chairman of the

¹ Page 324.

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1820, p. 162.

³ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."



THE OLD BRIDGE, SALFORD.

Congregational Union of England and Wales. The Rev. J. W. Massie, D.D., LL.D., was Mr. Hill's successor. Born in Glasgow, November 11th, 1798, and educated for the ministry at the Theological Academy, presided over by the Revs. Greville Ewing and Dr. Wardlaw, he proceeded thence, after three years' study to Gosport Academy, to prepare for Missionary service. In July, 1822, he sailed for Calcutta, and during five years "traversed Hindostan, planting missions at the most eligible points." His health, however, failing, "his wife and child dying, and other circumstances arising, he returned home, and prepared and published his work on British and Continental India."¹ Shortly afterwards Dr. Massie settled at Dunfermline, then at Dublin, and next at Perth, whence in 1841 he removed to Salford. Being an ardent politician, he threw himself energetically into the Anti-Corn Law movement, which was then moving the heart of England. Friction arose between himself and his people, and in 1848 he left Salford for London, having been appointed Secretary of the Home Missionary Society. He died May 8th, 1869. His brother was the Rev. Robert Massie, of Newton-le-Willows, and his nephew is Professor Massie, of Mansfield College. The Rev. John Raven,² educated at Highbury, and who had previously laboured at Hadleigh, Birmingham, and Dudley, followed Dr. Massie in 1848. He removed to Ipswich at the end of 1853, and afterwards to Felstead, in Essex. His death took place on Sunday, March 7th, 1875, aged seventy years. The next minister was the Rev. S. Clarkson,³ subsequently of Lytham. He had charge of the church from 1854 to 1861, being succeeded the following year by the Rev. S. Chisholm, who had been educated at Edinburgh, and previously laboured at Huddersfield. Mr. Chisholm resigned in 1867, and subsequently laboured at Ongar, in Essex. He is now resident at South Woodford, in the same county, without charge. The Rev. W. B. Camm, a student from Lancashire College, followed in 1868, remaining until 1871. Subsequently he became a Unitarian minister. The Rev. T. Stimpson, educated at Lancashire College, and who had previously laboured a short

¹ "Congregational Year Book," for 1870, p. 310.

² Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Vide vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

time at Middleton, was minister from 1872 to 1875. He is now at Thirsk, in Yorkshire. His successor was the Rev. W. McLellan from 1875 to 1879. He removed in the latter year to Stirling, being followed in 1879 by the Rev. Wm. Knox, who held the pastorate until his death, November 19th, 1883.¹ The pulpit remained vacant until 1888, when the Rev. George Street, formerly of St. Helens,² accepted the charge. He resigned in 1891, and has since become a Unitarian minister.

Chapel Street Chapel has suffered, like many other places, from the driftings of the population, and after Mr. Street's removal it was found desirable to hand over the premises to the Manchester and Salford Congregational Mission Board for mission purposes. The building, which has accommodation for over 1,000 people, is now called the Congregational Hall.³

III.—HOPE AND RICHMOND CHAPELS—BRANCHES FROM CHAPEL STREET.

IN the early part of 1837 the Congregational Association of Manchester and Salford addressed a letter "to the members of churches and congregations of the Independent denomination in Manchester and its vicinity," urging united effort in the direction of Congregational extension. The following passage will serve to illustrate the spirit of the promoters:—

If, by combined efforts of our churches, chapels be erected in well-chosen situations, and measures judiciously adopted to give them sanction and support, we believe it will not be found difficult to gather members under the sound of the Gospel. But we must be allowed to remind you that, having taken this first step, which only necessity requires, additional obligations will be thereby involved, obligations which, in regard for consistency, and in order to the success of the attempt, must not be overlooked. When chapels are reared and opened, those Christians, now connected with our churches, on whom, by reason of proximity of residence, or otherwise, the

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Vide ante p. 204.

duty may be deemed especially to devolve, will, we trust, consent to sacrifice their present associations and attachments, and be willing, by personal attendance and persevering effort, to encourage and aid the new interests. The Congregations should comprise, from the onset, some persons of well-tried piety, and established Christian reputation; they should be assisted to procure the services of holy and devoted ministers, adapted, in character and talent, to the duties of such stations; and they should, in every practicable way, be countenanced and sustained by the older churches.¹

This letter was signed by the Revs. R. S. McAll, Mosley Street; John A. Coombs, Chapel Street, Salford; Richard Fletcher, Grosvenor Street; James Gwyther, Hulme; James Griffin, Rusholme Road; George Taylor, New Windsor, Salford.

The Association so far succeeded in its efforts that it was proposed to erect six new chapels in Manchester and Salford, and the first of these was Hope Chapel. The corner stone of the building was laid on Friday, September 29th, 1837, by the Rev. J. A. Coombs, in presence of "a very numerous assemblage of friends." Its site is described as "on the north side of a street or intended street called Liverpool Street, which is a spacious avenue of great width, and about a thousand yards in length, extending in a line from Oldfield Road to Cross Lane." Mr. J. H. Hulme read the following from the inscription plate:—

The foundation stone of this building, situate in Liverpool Street, Oldfield Road, Salford, in the county of Lancaster, intended for the worship of Almighty God, was laid on Friday, the 29th day of September, in the first year of the reign of Victoria, Queen of England, and in the year of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 1837, by the Rev. J. Addison Coombs, minister of the church and congregation assembling in the Independent Chapel, Chapel Street, Salford. The first of six new chapels intended to be built by the Manchester and Salford Congregational Association.

"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation."—Isaiah xxviii., 16.

Architects: Hayley and Brown, Manchester. Builders: W. and H. Southern, Salford.

Mr. Coombs gave a "short history of the circumstances which led to the commencement of a building in that place," from which the following passage is extracted:—

¹ "Congregational Magazine" for 1837, p. 815.

Some time ago a number of his congregation, who distributed tracts in that district, were induced by the condition and population of the neighbourhood to establish the Hope Street Sunday School, where, in addition to reading, Divine service had been conducted on Sunday evenings¹ and one other evening in the week, and the schoolroom had been so much crowded both by adults at the religious services and by about 300 scholars for instruction that repeated calls had been made for the erection of a place of worship, and it was determined to erect one previously to the formation of the Congregational Association in March last. Subsequently it was agreed to unite with that association, and this was the first of six chapels which it was in the contemplation of the Association to erect in different parts of Manchester and Salford, and their immediate neighbourhood.²

The chapel was completed and opened for public worship on Wednesday, December 5th, 1838, when Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, preached in the morning from 2 Cor., iv., 5; and in the evening the Rev. James Parsons, of York, from Psalm lxxxvii., 3. The

¹ The Rev. John Anyon, of Pendlebury, assisted by Messrs. Robert Dracup, William Dracup, Thomas Harrison, and Joseph Gill conducted these services.

² This account, taken from the *Congregational Magazine* for 1837, ends by saying: "We understand that land has already been purchased for another chapel to be erected by the Congregational Association in Quay Street, Manchester, and another plot at the top of Northumberland Street, Higher Broughton, near the Zoological Gardens. The other sites at present proposed or contemplated are the neighbourhood of Swan Street, Ancoats, or St. George's Road, the vicinity of Red Bank, or at Miles Platting." It is interesting to note that in connection with this effort a memorial was sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking for the remission of the "duties on the excisable articles to be used in their erection, as brick, timber, and glass, &c.," which would probably amount to £2,000, and "which duties are remitted on the building materials employed in the erection of new [Episcopal] churches." The reply of the Chancellor, through his son, Mr. Rice, was that, as he was not "prepared to recommend to Parliament a measure for the building of Dissenting places of worship at the public expense, he could not consent to a vote accomplishing that object through the means of 'the remission of rates'" This led the memorialists to write: "The distinction between remitting a tax and voting a grant must be obvious to a child; but as Mr. Rice will not see it, we hope that some of his able Dissenting supporters at Cambridge will, on his next visit to his constituents, take him to the elegant new chapel they have recently built, and there make the Right Hon. Gentleman understand that they do not see the equity of a Liberal Government affording a bounty on church building while they impose a drawback upon the erection of Dissenting chapels."

collections amounted to £122 15s. ; and in the afternoon, when "about eighty gentlemen, ministers, and influential members from neighbouring churches sat down to an excellent dinner in the schoolroom under the chapel," the sum of £95 was subscribed. The cost of the building, including an enlargement in 1843, was £3,610. Almost immediately¹ after "upwards of forty members, including two of the deacons" belonging to the Chapel Street Church, "in the best spirit," retired "from their present fellowship" to form the new church at Hope Chapel. On the first Sunday in July, 1839, the Rev. John Legg Poore, a student from Highbury College, who had been introduced to the notice of the church by Mr. Thomas Wilson, began his labours as the first minister of Hope Chapel. His ordination took place on the 30th of October following, when Dr. Halley gave the charge to the minister. A rich ministry, in which Mr. Poore served the wider interests of his denomination not less faithfully than his own church, was brought to a termination in August, 1853, by his decision, in conjunction with the Rev. Richard Fletcher, of Grosvenor Street, to go to Australia in connection with the Colonial Missionary Society. Every part of the wide field over which that Society's operations extend was visited by Mr. Poore with beneficial results, and flying visits were paid to the old country to keep alive and deepen the Missionary spirit in the churches. He died at Mornington, Victoria, March 27th, 1867, aged fifty-one years. The Rev. George Burder Bubier was appointed Mr. Poore's successor at Hope Chapel. He was the son of the Rev. William Bubier, was born at Reading, February 2nd, 1823, and educated for the ministry at Homerton College. Previous to his settlement at Hope Chapel he held pastorates at Ossett, Essex, Brixton, and Cambridge, removing from the latter place to Salford in March, 1853. His ministry here of over ten years is described as the period when "his most characteristic and permanent work was done." In 1864 he accepted the position of Professor of Theology and Philosophy in Spring Hill College, in conjunction with the pastorate of Acock's Green Congregational Church. In the midst of these labours he died on Friday, March 19th, 1869,

¹ The church was formed on January 8th, 1839, when thirty-six members were transferred from Chapel Street Church for that purpose.

and was interred the following Wednesday in Salford Cemetery by the side of "his beloved boy." The Rev. R. W. Selbie, B.A., educated at Lancashire College, and ordained at Chesterfield, March 16th, 1853, removed from this place to become Mr. Bubier's successor at Hope Chapel, in July, 1866. In 1867 the new school buildings were opened, the cost of which was £7,000. Mr. Selbie concluded a useful ministry in 1883, and is now resident without charge in Salford.¹ His son is the Rev. W. B. Selbie, M.A., pastor of the Highgate Congregational Church, London. The Rev. R. G. Leigh, from Mossley, formerly of Farnworth and Egerton,² and at one time a scholar in Hope Chapel Sunday School,³ became Mr. Selbie's successor in November, 1885, and still continues a ministry full of promise. Hope Chapel has sitting accommodation for about 1,100 people, and the share which the church took in establishing the Congregational Churches at Eccles and Swinton has already been noticed. It deserves to be recorded that the church has been fruitful in supplying men for the ministry. The following persons have been associated with it:—Revs. G. S. Barrett, B.A., Norwich, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales for 1894; F. Carter, Northwich; J. A. Meeson, M.A., LL.B., Harrogate; A. C. Smith, Welford; and R. G. Leigh, the present minister.

Richmond Congregational Church is a second off-shoot from Chapel Street, but it originated in a less happy way than the one whose history precedes. Dr. Massie's strained relations with his people, which eventually resulted in the secession of ninety-seven members from his church, have been already named. The seceders "entered into an agreement to take an old disused Unitarian Chapel in Dawson's Croft, Greengate," a building "almost hidden in a narrow passage,"⁴ and here worship was commenced in March, 1843. The church was formally recognised on the 25th of May following by the other Congregational Churches of the neighbourhood, and in October of the same year the Rev. David Everard

¹ Mr. Selbie died on August 1st of this year, in his 69th year.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ His father, Mr. Charles Leigh, was one of the first Secretaries of the Sunday School.

⁴ "The Congregational Monthly" for 1892, p. 324.

Ford was invited to become pastor. Mr. Ford was the son of the Rev. David Ford, of Long Melford, in Suffolk, where he was born September 13th, 1797. He was educated at Wymondley College, having as a fellow-student "his life-long friend," Dr. Binney; and during his student days he "took charge of the neglected village of Wood End, some nine miles distant from the college, where he not only gathered a congregation, but was the means of building a chapel." On the completion of his college course he settled at Lymington, in Hampshire, where he remained until the end of 1853, when he accepted the invitation of the new church at Salford, then worshipping in the temporary building in Greengate. He did so on the understanding that a new chapel should be erected at once, and it was decided to secure a site in Broughton, near Broughton Bridge, which was owned by the Rev. John Clowes. Mr. Clowes was inclined to sell, but "the proposal to erect a Nonconformist chapel in the select district of Broughton was scouted by the Church of England party as an outrage, and Mr. Clowes was entreated to withhold his sanction to the proposal to desecrate this Episcopalian preserve." Mr. Clowes yielded to the pressure of his friends, and the Congregationalists "chose the most eligible site they could obtain in Salford, the garden of Mr. Thomas Agnew, called Richmond Hill, which was purchased in December, 1844, on chief rent at the price of one shilling per yard." The foundation stone of the new building was laid in May, 1845, by Mr. James Carlton, and the opening services were held on the 22nd and 23rd of April of the following year, the preachers being the Revs. Dr. Raffles, Dr. George Smith, of London; Dr. Halley, Dr. Dobbin (Wesleyan), J. A. James, of Birmingham; and W. L. Thornton, of Didsbury College. The collections reached the handsome sum of £881, and the total expense of the undertaking was £5,136. Mr. Ford laboured with great success until May, 1858, when he resigned. He continued, however, for some time to reside in Manchester, and served the churches by preaching the gospel, which was "still the joy of his life." He died at Bedford, October 23rd, 1875, his remains being laid in the Harpurhey Cemetery, Manchester. He was the author of "Decapolis," "Chorazin," "Damascus," "Laodicea," "Pastoral Addresses," and "Alarm in Zion," works

“widely known and influential;” and as a musician and composer of hymn tunes he was not unknown. His two sons, Mr. G. N. Ford and Mr. P. N. Ford, resident in Manchester, are prominent figures in the Congregational world, and worthily uphold an honoured name. The Rev. David Horne, B.A., whose ministerial training was obtained at Airedale College, and who had previously laboured at Sunderland, held the pastorate from February, 1861, to 1862, when he resigned. In 1865 he became the minister of Hope Chapel, Hanley, and is now resident at Altrincham without charge. His nephew is the cultured and eloquent young minister of Kensington, the Rev. C. Sylvester Horne, M.A. The vacancy at Richmond Chapel was occupied from 1863 to 1867 by the Rev. J. Dickerson Davies, M.A., educated at New College, and previously of Guernsey. An affliction of the throat and failing health compelled him to relinquish the pastorate, but the church “generously continued his salary for a year.” Mr. Davies is now at Burgess Hill. The Rev. D. Jones Hamer, a student from Lancashire College, was appointed in May, 1867, and three years afterwards school buildings were erected at a cost of £3,500. In 1875 a considerable number of the wealthiest supporters of the church left to form the new church at Broughton Park, previous to which the carriages waiting on a Sunday for the conclusion of the service at Richmond Chapel caused it to be called “the carriage way to heaven.” Two years later, the sum of £2,200 was raised, the interest of which was to meet the “chief rent” charge, and in the same year Mr. Hamer resigned “amid unanimous testimonies of the high level and fine influence of his ministrations.” From Salford he removed to Wolverhampton, and subsequently to Melbourne, where he died suddenly, March 7th, 1886, aged forty years. The Rev. Robert Craig, M.A., educated at Glasgow University, ordained in 1866, minister of the E. U. Church, Blackfriars Street, Glasgow, and subsequently Professor in the Evangelical Union Theological Hall, succeeded Mr. Hamer in September, 1878. He successfully held the pastorate until August, 1885, when he removed to Brighton Street E. U. Church, Edinburgh, where he still labours. In the January following the Rev. B. J. Snell, M.A., B.Sc., educated at New College, and who had previously ministered at

Newcastle-on-Tyne, received an invitation to the pastorate, which he accepted. It was during his ministry that new and more commodious premises were erected in 1890 for the Adelphi Ragged School,¹ costing over £1,900. In 1891, to the regret of his congregation, Mr. Snell removed to Brixton, having accepted an invitation to succeed the late Dr. Stevenson in the pulpit so long associated with the fervid eloquence of [the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown, B.A. The Rev. H. H. Snell, B.A., succeeded his brother, March 13th, 1892. He also was educated at New College, settled first at Wednesbury, Staffs., then at Wickliffe Congregational Church, Leicester, becoming afterwards the minister of the Octagon Chapel (Unitarian), Norwich. Finding himself, however, out of sympathy with Unitarianism he publicly announced his inability to continue his ministry in that denomination, and after a brief period was called to the pastorate of Richmond Chapel, where he still labours amidst encouraging signs of success. Connected with the church is an important branch of the P. S. A. Society; and it may be interesting to note that the amount of money raised by the church since its commencement to the end of last year is £54,876 19s. 5d.

IV.—PENDLETON (BROAD STREET), CHARLESTOWN, SEEDLEY AND REGENT (TRAFFORD ROAD) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

THE Congregational Church at Pendleton owes its origin to the New Windsor Congregational Church. One of its deacons "most laudably exerted himself, not only to raise a good Sunday School here, but to gather a congregation of devout worshippers." This deacon was Mr. John Hewitt, who found valuable helpers in Messrs. Isaac Cleasby and P. Dickens. Mr. Hewitt commenced work at Charlestown, then in a sadly neglected condition, on September 27th, 1829. About 100 children were present when the school was opened, and Sunday evening services were soon

¹ The Ragged School was carried on for many years in a private house, but in May, 1888, a Building Committee for the present new school was formed.

started. A large schoolroom was built and opened for public worship, June 27th, 1830, when the Rev. George Taylor, of New Windsor, was the preacher. For five years after the opening of the school the scholars, who were known as Mr. Hewitt's "ragged regiment," were regularly marched to New Windsor Chapel. Finding, however, the distance to be inconvenient, "the establishment of a branch church was, after much deliberation and many prayers, determined."¹ Accordingly, on New Year's Day, 1836, the Rev. George Taylor, "with much feeling and many fears," dismissed from his church at New Windsor nine members. Mr. Hewitt being one of the number, to become the nucleus of the church whose place of meeting was then at Charlestown. Until the time of his retirement from the New Windsor Church Mr. Taylor presided at all the meetings of the young church, and "administered Christ's ordinances either personally or by means of his friend, Dr. Clunie." In February, 1838, the Rev. John Anyon was asked to work the church along with his own at Pendlebury, which he did until July 31st, 1843, when he resigned the charge of Charlestown, and the connection between the two places ended. In the following August a call was presented to the Rev. A. E. Pearce, which he accepted. Born at Barrington, Cambridgeshire, March 14th, 1811, and designed for the medical profession, he was placed under a doctor at Cambridge to pursue his studies. Advised, however, by the Rev. J. A. James and others to enter the ministry, he went to Birmingham and attended lectures at Spring Hill College, preaching at the same time at Lozells Chapel. From this place he removed to Charlestown, and the congregation growing under his preaching a new chapel became necessary. In a description of the structure written at the time of its erection, in 1847, it is said to be "most eligibly situated in the centre of the populous township of Pendleton," to be "a handsome stone building of Gothic outline, after the example of Whitby Abbey," having accommodation for about 600 persons. Spacious and convenient schoolrooms were constructed under the chapel, the cost of the whole being about £4,500, towards which Sir E. Armitage and Mr. Hewitt gave £1,000

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1846, p. 563.

each. A "beautiful and effective organ," which cost originally 400 guineas, was presented to the church by Mr. Samuel Fletcher. The opening service took place on July 14th, 1847, when the Revs. Dr. Raffles and James Parsons were the preachers. In the two schools there were said to be 800 scholars. In the new home the church assumed the new name of the Pendleton Congregational Church. The condition of Mr. Pearce's health led to his resignation and removal to St. Heliers, Jersey, in November, 1857, where he laboured till his death, January 16th, 1867. He published a course of lectures on "Inspiration" and a little volume entitled "A Voice in Rama Hushed," which is described as "a gem of its kind," "written in a chaste and elegant style."¹ In May, 1858, the Rev. S. St. Neots Dobson, B.A., educated at Airedale College, and formerly of York, then co-pastor at Yarmouth, succeeded Mr. Pearce at Pendleton. He resigned in January, 1867, and subsequently laboured at Dover and Bungay, in Suffolk. It was during Mr. Dobson's ministry that a new school was erected at a cost of £2,400, the foundation stone of which was laid on October 8th, 1864, by James Sidebottom, Esq. The opening service took place on July 12th, 1867, and it deserves to be noted that the building contains a seven-light stained glass window, the gift of Mr. Lightbown, one of the deacons. In July of the same year the Rev. Edwin Walker assumed the pastorate. He also was educated at Airedale College, and previous to his coming to Pendleton was co-pastor to the Rev. J. E. Millson, of Southport, for about two years. Mr. Walker's career in Pendleton was "one of peaceful, quiet, steady prosperity." His sudden death on February 17th, 1891, came as a shock to his brethren in the district, by whom he was greatly beloved. The Rev. J. W. Kiddle, "one of his oldest friends," conducted a short service in his house previous to removing the body for interment in Salford Cemetery, on February 20th. In the church in which he preached so long is a memorial tablet thus inscribed:—

In loving memory of the Rev. Edwin Walker, who died February 17th, 1891, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and who was for twenty-three years the faithful and devoted pastor of this church. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1848, p. 583.

The Rev. H. E. Radbourne, educated at Nottingham and Cheshunt, and whose previous pastorates have been at Newcastle-on-Tyne and Broughton Park, Manchester,¹ began his ministry at Pendleton, July, 1891, which he successfully continues.

In 1855 many of those who went from Charlestown to Pendleton resolved to return and form another church. This was done on February 25th, in that year, the Rev. G. Palmer, of Ashley Lane, presiding on the occasion. The Rev. John Spencer Hill, educated at Bedford, and formerly of Cheltenham, became the minister, November 16th, 1856. He remained until 1860, when he resigned, and was subsequently for a short time minister at Middleton.² The Rev. E. G. Barnes, a student from Cavendish College, Manchester, followed in 1863. It was during his ministry that the present chapel was erected, the foundation stone of which was laid on October 1st, 1864. It was opened by Dr. Allon the following year, and its cost, including extras, is given as £3,768. The sitting accommodation provided is for 550 persons. Amongst the liberal friends of the movement were Sir Elkanah Armitage and Sons. Indeed it is recorded that the erection was the result of their "promise of generous assistance, personal and pecuniary." Mr. Barnes remained until 1867, when he resigned and entered the ministry of the Established Church. His successor was the Rev. D. N. Jordan, B.A., a student from Spring Hill College, who accepted the church's invitation October 6th, 1867. He did a useful work until February, 1875, when he removed to Cheadle Hulme. It was during his ministry that new schools were erected at the cost of Sir E. Armitage. In May, 1875, the Rev. J. W. Kiddle, from Coventry, became the pastor, removing in October, 1884, to Stretford, where he still labours.³ The Rev. D. W. Jordan, B.A., returned to his old charge in 1885, and remained until his death, March 28th, 1888. The present pastor is the Rev. J. M. Carrack, B.A., a student from Airedale College, who succeeded Mr. Jordan in the year of his decease.

Seedley Congregational Church is the outcome of a secession from the New Windsor Church in 1868. Meetings were first held

¹ Vide ante p. 195.

² Vide p. 277.

³ Vide ante p. 77.

in a Ragged School, Ellor Street, where a church was formed consisting of twenty-nine persons, the Rev. H. W. Walker, Chaplain of Salford Cemetery, presiding on the occasion. Shortly afterwards services were transferred to Blair's Cottage, Cross Lane, then to Wilton House, where the congregation remained about six years. Mr. Wyatt became the lay pastor during this period, and remained such about sixteen months, the Rev. H. W. Walker also giving valuable assistance. On September 13th, 1873, the foundation stone of the present School Chapel, in West Liverpool Street, was laid by Henry Lee, Esq. The new erection was opened in 1874, by the Rev. D. Jones Hamer, of Richmond Chapel. It cost £1,156, and the sitting accommodation provided for 350 persons. In 1874 the Rev. William Knox, formerly of Farnworth and Kirkham,¹ became the minister. He resigned in 1877, and subsequently became pastor of the Chapel Street Church, Salford.² After his removal the church was without a minister for several years, during which period the Rev. J. W. Kiddle met the deacons at stated intervals, and presided over church and other meetings. In March, 1882, Mr. R. P. Ellis was chosen lay pastor. He resigned through ill health in 1886, and in June of the following year, Mr. B. Wyld accepted the lay pastorate. The schools were enlarged during his ministry. He left in 1890, and in January, 1892, the present lay pastor, Mr. Bescoby, took charge of the congregation. The premises are free from debt, and there is land for a chapel when required.

Regent Congregational Church originated in 1870 with a number of persons, who seceded from Hope Chapel. The first place of meeting was a small room in Regent Street, Salford, which, becoming too small for the congregation, a removal was effected in 1877, to Shaftesbury Hall, Robert Hall Street, and thence, after a short time, to the Liberal Club in Trafford Road. Valuable assistance was rendered the church at this time by the Revs. D. J. Hamer and J. W. Kiddle. The district was felt to be so important, that the Chapel Building Society purchased a large plot of land at a cost of nearly £2,000, for the prospected new chapel. The next remove was to the Conservative Club, but

¹ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide ante p. 217.

these premises also soon ceased to be equal to the requirements of the work. About three years ago, the church was on the eve of disbanding, when the Revs. B. J. Snell, M.A., and J. W. Kiddle, as the representatives of the Ministers and Deacons' Association, met the members, and advised them to keep together. This they did, and since then the state of things has greatly improved. In 1891, Regent Church, after an absence of a few years, re-appeared on the list of County Union stations, and in September, 1892, a new iron chapel was opened in Elizabeth Street, Trafford Road. The cost was about £500, and the sitting accommodation is for 400 persons. There is no minister: students from the college give valuable assistance.

CHAPTER IV.

OLDHAM AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

I.—GREENACRES CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

THE Uniformity Act of 1662 found a victim in Oldham as it did in so many other Lancashire towns. The Rev. Robert Constantine was in that year ejected from its Parish Church, and thus became the father of Oldham Nonconformity. He was the third son of the Rev. Thomas Constantine, the rector of Taxall, in Cheshire, was baptised March 14th, 1618-9, educated under Mr. Greenby at Glossop, where his widowed mother lived, and matriculated in the third class at Glasgow, in May, 1638. He was presented by the people of Oldham to a meeting of the Manchester Classis, on November 3rd, 1647, "for allowance to be their minister," having previously been for a few years at Fairfield and Buxton, in Derbyshire. In 1650 the Parliamentary Commissioners reported thus concerning him and his charge :—

Wee alsoe psent that in the pish of Ouldham there is one pish Church, and that Mr. Robte Constantine supplyes the Cure, And that hee is an Orthodox Minister, and well qualliffyed in lyffe and conversacon, And put to officiate at Ouldham by Order from the Comittie of plundered Ministers, as wee belive, and that he should have for his sallery one hundred pounds p. ann out of the tyths in the same pish, but it is not all payed him as yett ; And wee psent the tyths of the said pish to bee worth one hundred and forty pounds p. ann.¹

Up to October, 1650, Mr. Constantine's name appears as Minister of Oldham, when, refusing the Engagement, "Justice Ashton, of Chatterton, vigorously prosecuted him so as to force him to remove."² Invited to Birstall, in Yorkshire, he remained

¹ "Commonwealth Church Survey" (Record Society Series, vol. i.),
. 22.

² Calamy's "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 371.

there until March, 1654-5, when he was reinstated in his former charge at Oldham. During the intervening period the pulpit was occupied by the Rev. John Lake, who first got in as a "supplier." The Constantine party, however, never allowed matters to rest until they had brought about the restoration of their old minister. The following were the articles which they exhibited against Mr. Lake :—

Imp. That the said Mr. John Lake hath been a grand cavaleire in former tymes, and is yett a frequent companion of malignant and disaffected people.

2. That in all congregacons where the said Mr. John Lake hath officiated as minister [he] hath by the godly been reputed to be an enemy to reformacon and the power of godlyness.

3. That whereas one, Mr. Robert Constantyne, a Godly minister, who was settled at Ouldham by order from the hon'r^{ble} parlam^t was, by reason of the informacon of some disaffected p'sons, detained and kept from the congregacon, and the said Mr. John Lake, in his absence, in a subtile way gott in as a supplier of the congregacon; upon his admittance made sollome promises and protestacons not to settle himselfe as minister ther.

4. That the said Mr. John Lake, shortly after hee was gott in, gave notice hee would administer the sacram^t to the congregacon, who then did, and still doth, administer the same in a general and promiscuous way, contrarie to the rule injoynd by the hon'r^{ble} parlam^t, or practised by any reformed congregacon, admitting thereunto many cavaliers óf remote parte; and invaies in his sermons against the Godly, because they doe not, nor in conscience can they, come in and joyne with such to abuse the ordinance of Christ.

5. That the said Mr. John Lake, not regarding his promise nor protestacon, with the ade and assistance of some whom he had honoured with his promiscuous administracon of the sacram^t, gott hands to a writting or petition, many of which said hands were persons of another parish, which was sent, as wee alsoe are given to understand, to the honr^{ble} Committee of Plundered Ministers, and thereupon an order granted for his settlement, in which order is expressed that the s^d Mr. Constantyne was sequestered from his place, whereas hee was never proceeded against in poynt of sequestracon, nor called to any tryal.

6. That the said Mr. John Lake, since hee obtained the said order, doth much countenance loose persons, indevoringe with all his power to settle such in offices to serve his and their one designs for the discorishment of such as desire reformation.

7. That the said Mr. John Lake doth baptysse basthardes, not onely of his own congrecon but of other parishes, the parents not giveing satisfaccon to congrecon, w^{ch} thinges doth very much discorish the harts of the godly.¹

¹ "Manchester Classis" (Chetham Society, New Series, vol. xxiv.), p. 386.

Dr. John Lake (for such he afterwards became) was subsequently rector of Prestwich, and Bishop of Chichester, being one of the "Seven Bishops" committed to the Tower by James II. in 1688. Mr. Constantine remained at Oldham until 1662, when he was ejected. In 1671 he was living at Salford, but the Indulgence Act of the following year saw him with a license for preaching in a thatched house at Greenacres. The liberty which the Nonconformists had enjoyed under this Act was withdrawn after a few months, and if Mr. Constantine and his friends had worship at all during the years of persecution which immediately followed it would be in secret, and at irregular times. Previous to 1695, though how long is not clear, he was living in a house at Greenacres, which did duty also as a place of worship. Writing in 1854 the Rev. G. G. Waddington thus describes this building:—

It has no pretensions to architectural beauty. It simply consists of two cottage-dwellings; one now in the occupation of Robert Lees, and another recently occupied by John Kinder; a farmhouse occupied by Mr. James Mills and a barn and cowhouse also in the tenancy of Mr. Mills. The cottages, farmhouse, barn, and shippon constitute one long and rather irregular building, having a somewhat antiquated appearance, and suggesting the idea that it was formerly a residence of considerable respectability, fitted for the occupation of a thoroughly wealthy farmer, or yeoman.¹

The death of his wife, on March 29th, 1695, and Mr. Constantine's own infirmities, led to his retirement from ministerial duty and to his removal to Manchester, where he died some four years after. In the "Northowram Register" appears the following:—

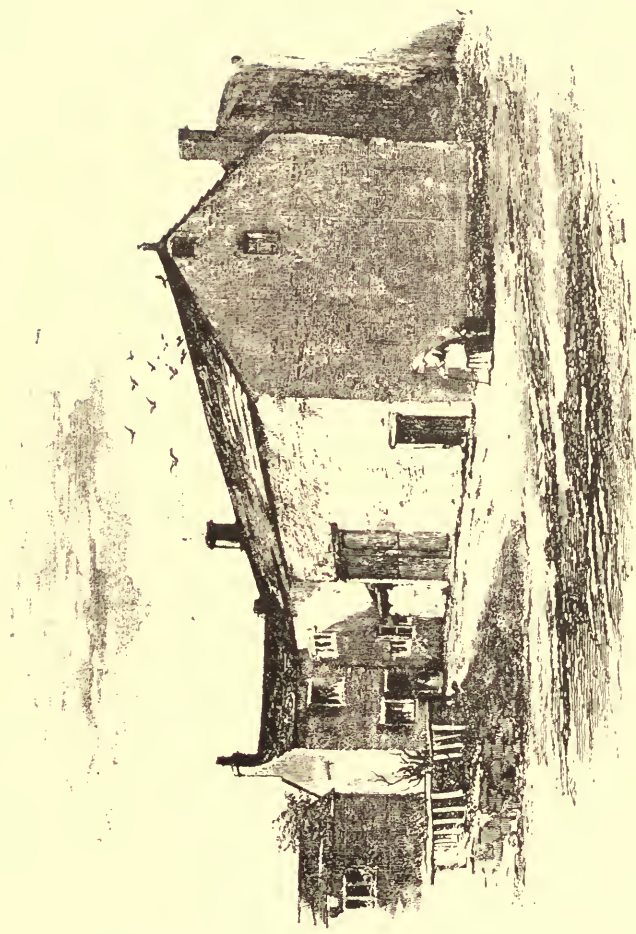
Mr. Robt. Constantine, formerly parson of Oldham, lived and dyed in Manchester, bur. at Oldham, Dec. 16, '99, aged 80.²

Upon his tombstone, in the Oldham Parish Church graveyard, is the following inscription:—

Here lyeth the bodye of
ROBERT CONSTANTINE, CLERK,
Who was buried December 14th, 1699;
and FRANCIS, his Wife,
who was buried March the 29th, 1695;
and SARAH, his Daughter, wife of Ellis Rainshaw,
of Manchester, Apothecary,
Who was buried May 22nd, 1695.

¹ "History of Greenacres Chapel," p. 7.

² Page 99.—The reader will note a discrepancy in the date here given with the one on Mr. Constantine's tombstone.



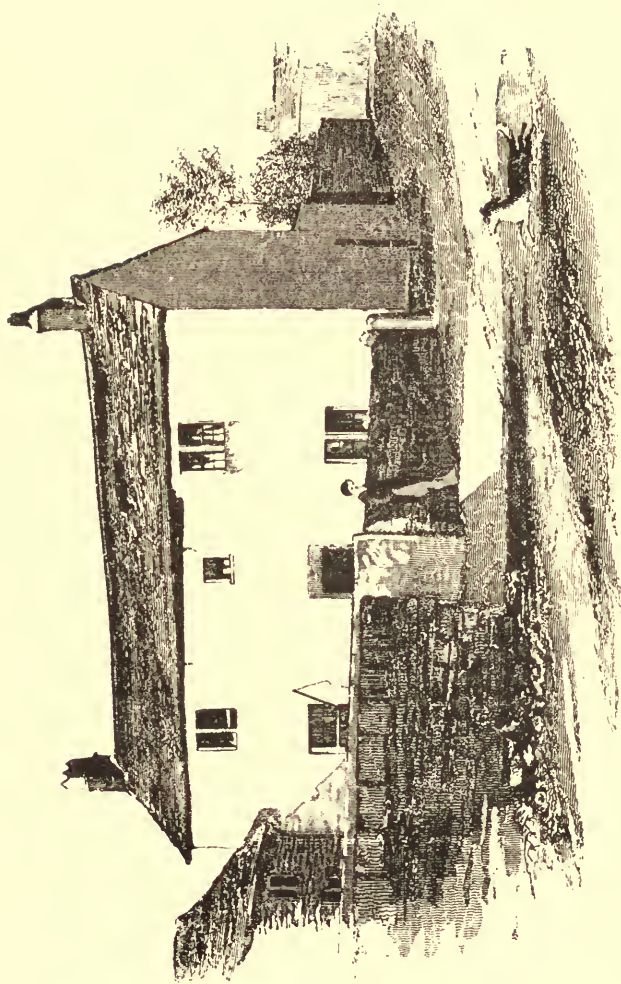
HOUSE WHERE THE REV. R. CONSTANTINE PREACHED.

Calamy says that in the "prime of life he was a man of a clear head, fruitful abilities, solid learning, and a pleasant conversation. He was also a well-accomplished preacher, having a good method, an audible voice, and an agreeable delivery. But, living to be very old, his faculties decayed, and he was superannuated with respect to his work. He died, however, as he had lived, in good credit both with ministers and private Christians."¹ His only son, Samuel, baptised at Oldham, November 25th, 1660, died of consumption, and was buried there on the 6th of August, 1683. The immediate successors of Mr. Constantine are not known; but a Mr. Lawton, afterwards of Liverpool,² and the Rev. James Hardy, of Stockport, are named in this connection, though whether they were more than occasional supplies has not been ascertained. Nor is it known when the Rev. Benjamin Denton, M.A., the next minister, took charge of the congregation. He came from Halifax, and appears to have been intimate with Oliver Heywood, being several times mentioned in his diaries. His place of residence was at Barrowshaw Hill, and, in addition to his pastoral duties, he taught a school. The building in which he preached was the third which the Nonconformists of Oldham had licensed for worship, and the first chapel proper. Mr. Waddington describes it thus in 1854:—

A stranger, looking at the building from the South East point of view, would not readily suppose that it had been formerly used as a place of worship. The lapse of seventy years since it was last used for that purpose may easily be supposed to have altered its outward appearance, as well as its internal arrangement. From its rectangular shape, however, and the position in which it stands, it is not difficult to imagine that in its best days it was a tolerably neat and commodious place of worship. . . . The building was not erected, nor originally intended, for divine worship, and appears to have been selected as the most suitable in the neighbourhood for that purpose, and capable of being easily altered and adapted for the convenient accommodation of a congregation. Prior to the year 1699, the building consisted of a barn and a low house attached to it. From this circumstance it was called the "Greenacres Barn" for many years after it was converted into a chapel. The land in front of this building was originally used as a farm yard in con-

¹ "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 371.

² Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity," for information about the family, who appear to have had an estate at Counthill.



"GREENACRES BARN," THIRD LICENSED PREACHING HOUSE AT GREENACRES.

nection with the shippon. It afterwards served the purpose of a chapel-yard. The building is now converted into cottages, and the ground connected with it is added to the grave yard, or used for the accommodation of the cottage dwellings now occupied by William Hanson and Cyrus Rhodes.¹

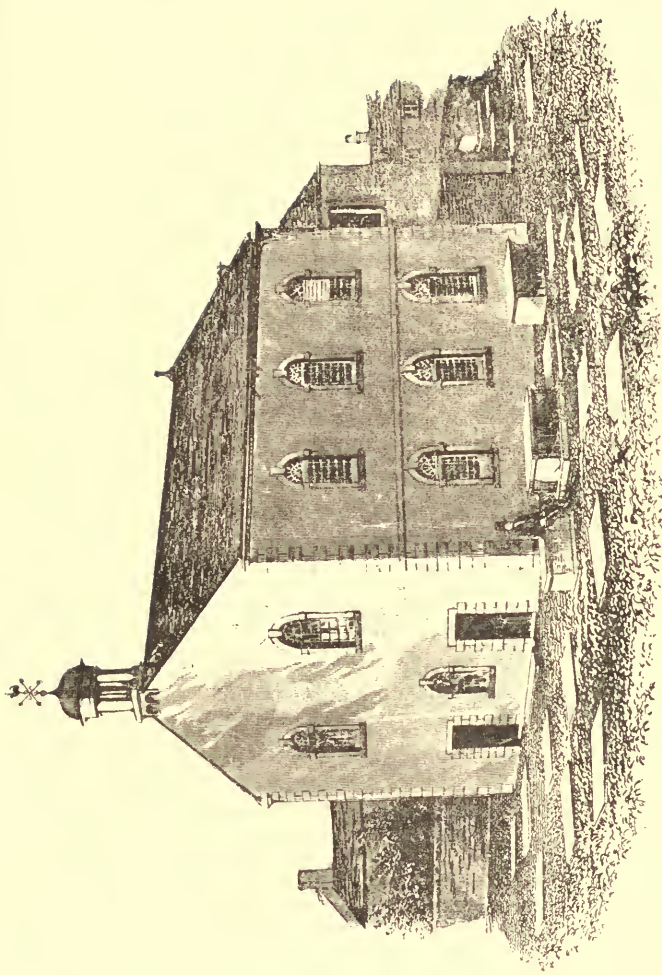
It was this building which the Sacheverel rioters partially destroyed on June 21st, 1715. Unless Mr. Denton had as assistant the Rev. James Burgess, who follows him in the ministerial roll, his ministry terminated some years before his death,² but he continued to reside in his house at Barrowshaw Hill. In the Oldham Parish Church Registers is the following, under date 1743:—"January 18th, Mr. Benjamin Denton (late Dissenting teacher at Greenacres) Buried from Counthill." His successor was the Rev. James Burgess, already named. He had previously laboured at Darwen, and came to Oldham about 1733, residing at Hey. In 1745 he purchased some houses at Barrowshaw Hill from Lydia Denton, sister to the Rev. Benjamin Denton. About 1746 Mr. Burgess left his church at Greenacres to take charge of the new interest at Delph, across the Yorkshire border, which had originated with the church at Greenacres. He died at Hey some time before 1775.³ The Rev. Edward Harrison, a farmer and village preacher, of Swindon in Craven, was the next minister. He was introduced to the Greenacres congregation by Mr. John Winterbottom, of Green Lane, a woollen manufacturer, who frequently went to Craven on business matters. Invited to preach a few sabbaths, Mr. Harrison did so, and with such acceptance that the church presented to him an invitation to the pastorate, to which he acceded. The journey on horseback from Swindon to Greenacres was attended with a serious accident, which eventually resulted in Mrs. Harrison's death.⁴ Thus the new minister entered upon his duties amidst the gloom of family affliction, the discouragements of "a weak and declining" church, and with the prospect of an

¹ "History of Greenacres Chapel," pp. 33, 34.

² Mr. Waddington says "it appears highly probable that Mr. Denton closed his life and ministry together in January, A.D. 1743." ("History of Greenacres Chapel," p. 51). For ten years, however, his successor had been labouring here at that time.

³ Vide vol's. ii. and iii of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for full information about the Revs. James Burgess, father and son; also p. 293 of this volume.

⁴ Vide vol iii, of "Lancashire Nonconformity."



GREENACRES OLD CHAPEL, ERECTED IN 1784.

income "small and insufficient for the support of a minister in any tolerable degree of respectability and comfort." Amongst those of his people who showed great kindness is named Jeremiah Fielding, of Hartshead, whose sister attended Mrs. Harrison until her death, and afterwards married the bereaved husband. Mr. Harrison lived in a house situated in a field called the Hare Hill, at the top of Strines Fold, and after remaining about three years at Greenacres he returned to Swindon. His son, the Rev. Joseph Harrison, was for some years minister of Bethel Chapel, Bury.¹ The Rev. Mr. Gladstone is mentioned as the next minister, but concerning him all information is wanting.² His successor was the Rev. Robert Harrop, who was admitted a student in Daventry Academy in 1761. In 1765 he became minister of Millbrow, in Derbyshire, and Greenacres, continuing this double pastorate until 1769, when he removed to Hale, in Cheshire. Here he remained until 1816, having charge for about six years of the congregation at Cross Street (Cheshire), afterwards of the Altrincham congregation for about two years, in addition to his pastorate at Hale. In 1816 he retired from ministerial duty, being then seventy years old, but he lived some twenty-one years longer, having attained to the patriarchal age of ninety-one at the time of his death. The Rev. William James followed. He is described as rustic in appearance, of plain and simple manners, hyper-Calvinistic in doctrine, lively and earnest in his preaching, and fond of anecdotes, which he often repeated in his sermons. He lodged with one William Wrigley, at the top of the meadows, in the neighbourhood of Strines, whose wife, Mary Wrigley, used to lead the little black pony upon which the minister rode to chapel when the infirmities of age rendered his walking thither impossible. "On these occasions," says Mr. Waddington, "it was not unusual for Mary Wrigley to allow the pony to stand grazing by the road side with the old minister on its back, whilst she stayed to converse with any acquaintance or friend who happened to meet them. The old gentleman does not appear to have considered this treatment as in any way disrespectful, but waited patiently until the pony and its conductor were ready to

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide p. 293.

pursue their journey.”¹ Increased accommodation became necessary a few years before Mr. James died, and how the erection of a chapel to supersede the modest structure which had done duty probably since the days of Robert Constantine was brought about, Mr. Waddington tells us in the following passage :—

One Sabbath day, about the year 1783, Mr. James was preaching with somewhat more than his accustomed energy of manner. In the delivery of the sermon he happened to strike the pulpit rather heavily. The pulpit not being in a condition to bear such treatment, a portion of it was broken off, and fell on one of the hearers who was sitting near it. Mr. James then remarked that it was high time to build another chapel, for if they did not, some of the congregation might sustain serious injury. As the pulpit was in such a dilapidated and infirm condition, it may be inferred that the condition of the pews was not very greatly superior. However this may have been, I am credibly informed that on the following week some of the leading members of the church and congregation met together, and consulted about the propriety of erecting a larger and better chapel. The result of their deliberations was a determination to erect a sanctuary at Greenacres suited to the requirements of the congregation and the surrounding neighbourhood.²

The building was commenced in 1784, and on May 4th, 1785, it was completed and opened for worship, the ministers assisting in the service being the Revs. David Bruce, of Liverpool; R. Simpson, of Bolton; and Noah Blackburn, of Tockholes; the pastor, Mr. James, continuing the opening services on the following Sabbath. Shortly after this the infirmities of the minister made it necessary that he should have assistance in his duties, and John Handforth, probably a native of Oldham, was invited to the position. The appointment appears to have been of an “indefinite and irregular” character, and “led to serious misunderstandings and painful proceedings.” Mr. James died May 12th, 1788, and shortly afterwards “those persons who thought that John Handforth was imposing himself on the people without having received a proper invitation, and that he was not eligible to be a minister, proceeded to give an invitation to the Rev. William Howell, of Knaresborough.”³

¹ “History of Greenacres Chapel,” p. 61.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Much bitterness arose, litigation ensued; but the matter was settled on October 31st, 1789, both Mr. Handforth and Mr. Howell withdrawing from the field.¹ The Rev. Thomas Hale was chosen to the pastorate a few months after the settlement of the dispute. He was born in July, 1762, at Ross, in Herefordshire, and educated at Oswestry by the Rev. Edward Williams, subsequently Dr Williams, of Rotherham College. His first charge was Holywell, in Flintshire, whence, in 1790, he removed to Greenacres. His ministry of four years is said "to have improved the spirit of the church," against which the unhappy dispute previously mentioned had brought "a degree of odium" which "greatly injured its prosperity." His removal to the Old Chapel, Heckmondwike, in August, 1794, was occasioned by the "intense suffering and impoverishment of the people" at Greenacres, which made it impossible for them adequately to support him. At Heckmondwike, in addition to his pastorate, Mr. Hale kept a boarding school, and in this double sphere he continued to labour until death came to his

¹ Mr. Handforth afterwards settled at Congleton, in Cheshire, and subsequently at Gatley, where he was ordained July 15th, 1801. In Miall's "Congregationalism in Yorkshire" (p. 362) is the following, which may refer to the same person: "1794 Rev. — Handforth from Lancashire. He had been originally a soldier in the Spanish wars. He was not a man of education, but of great earnestness, and he left Skipton, 1797, much regretted." Mr. Howell had been educated by the Rev. Robert Gentleman, at Shrewsbury, and was ordained over the little church at Knaresborough in 1782. From the pen of his son, Mr. William Howell, the following appears in Miall's "Congregationalism in Yorkshire" (p. 299): "My father was chosen by the London Missionary Society as the Superintendent of the Mission to the South Seas in the second voyage of the 'Duff.' They sailed at the close of 1799. The 'Duff' was captured by a French privateer, and all the missionaries were carried to Monte Video. After a delay of some months they bought a brig, and set sail for England. They were next captured by a Portuguese flat, and taken to Lisbon. From thence they sailed for England, and arrived at Falmouth about the end of the year. My father at once resumed his charge of the church at Windsor Lane, after an absence of nearly a year. He continued to hold the pastorate till 1833, when he publicly resigned his charge, but preached once every Sunday until 1835, when he resigned entirely." He died on Monday, June 20th, 1842, in his 89th year. (*Evangelical Magazine*, 1842, p. 573.)

relief in 1821. In the graveyard of the chapel at Heckmondwike is a tombstone thus inscribed :—

Beneath this tombstone are deposited the remains of the
 REV. THOS. HALE,
 who departed this life on the 17th day of May, 1821,
 in the 59th year of his age,
 and the 27th of his ministry at this place.
 MARGARET, his wife,
 died at Dewsbury, February 22nd, 1835,
 in the 72nd year of her age.
 MARY HALE, only daughter of the above,
 died May 4th, 1836, aged 46 years.

During the whole of Mr. Hale's ministry at Heckmondwike the pressure of the times was exceedingly great, and the congregation suffered seriously. He took their misfortunes and trade losses so grievously to heart that he became prematurely old. "During the last two years of his life," says his biographer, "he suffered so much from weakness that he was unable to stand through a service, and was obliged to preach sitting upon a high stool."¹ Brief as Mr. Hale's ministry at Greenacres was, and hard as were the times, he succeeded in getting the "Old Parsonage" erected in 1791, "a neat and respectable country house." The Rev. Wm. Coles was appointed his successor, August 27th, 1794.

The following interesting account of his ordination is worth preserving because of the information it gives of the man as well as of the service itself :—

On Wednesday, the 22nd of April [1795], was ordained at Greenacres, nine miles east of Manchester, the Rev. Mr. Coles. This gentleman was nourished up in the words of truth and sound doctrine, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Moody, of Warwick. Being devoted to the Christian ministry, he was sent for education to a minister who kept a small academy at Newcastle-under-Lyme. His first labours were at Uttoxeter, in Staffordshire; but the heat of opposition was so great in that place that the people were deterred from attending his ministry, and he thought it his duty to remove. He then put himself under the direction of Mr. [Captain Jonathan] Scott, and was employed at Market Drayton, in Shropshire, and several other adjacent places. Greenacres being destitute of a stated pastor by the removal of Mr. Hale to Heckmondwike, a place celebrated in Yorkshire as a fountain which has enriched the garden of the Lord, Mr. Coles received a

¹ Peel's "Nonconformity in Spen Valley," p. 179.

unanimous invitation, and thought it his duty there to settle. The ordination was attended with great solemnity. The spirit of religion was kept up to the end, though the service was long; as this service must be in the nature of things, as it obtains among the Dissenters. The introductory duties of the day were performed by the Rev. Mr. Blackburn, of Saddleworth, Delph, who received a confession of faith from the minister strictly orthodox and well expressed. Mr. Handlezark, of Stockport, in Cheshire, prayed the ordination prayer with great fervency of mind. Paul's ministry, as related by himself to the elders of Ephesus, was urged by the Rev. Mr. Cockin as a pattern to the succeeding servants of God. And the Rev. Mr. Hale enforced the great duties of a congregation in a pathetic address from Phil. ii., 16. We were honoured at dinner with the company of two very sensible and serious Moravian ministers, and the conversation very agreeably turned upon the best methods of promoting religion in our own congregations and in the distant parts of the world.¹

Mr. Coles is described as—

An intelligent man, of good abilities, active habits, and very respectable qualifications as a preacher. As to his personal appearance, rather little, slender, and dark complexioned.²

In the early part of 1801 he removed to Stand Chapel, and subsequently to Bakewell, in Derbyshire.³ The Rev. Robert Jenkinson was the next minister. He had previously laboured a few years at Haslingden, where he was ordained, October 30th, 1797. He became successor to Mr. Coles, August 16th, 1801; but his death, on May 23rd, 1803, in his 29th year, terminated a ministry which was full of promise.⁴ The Rev. Joseph Galland followed. His father was the Rev. Robert Galland, minister of the Independent Church at Ilkeston, in Derbyshire, and subsequently at Holmfirth. Joseph Galland was born at Ilkeston, June 29th, 1778, and was sent to a school at Tintwistle, kept by the Rev. Mr. Hudson, Congregational minister. Amongst his school-fellows were Wm. Moorhouse and John Cockin, afterwards eminent Congregational ministers in Yorkshire. Sent to Batley to learn the woollen business, he attended the ministry of Mr. Hale, at Heckmondwike, formerly of Greenacres, and joined his church January 1st, 1801. In September of that year, he was admitted

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1795, p. 290.

² "History of Greenacres Chapel," p. 82.

³ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity,"

⁴ Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity," for a copy of the inscription on his tablet in the Greenacres Chapel.

a student in Rotherham College, then under the presidency of Dr. Williams. On the completion of his college course he settled at Greenacres, commencing his duties as minister on the second Sunday in December, 1805. His ordination took place the succeeding year, an account of which is here subjoined:—

August 20th.—Mr. Galland, late student at the Rotherham Academy, was ordained pastor of the Independent Church at Green-Acres, Lancashire. Mr. Coles, of Stand, introduced the service by reading the Scriptures and by prayer; Mr. Meldrum, of Hatherlow, discoursed on the nature of a Gospel Church; Mr. Blackburn, of Delph, engaged in the ordination prayer; Mr. Cockin, of Halifax, gave the charge from Acts xxvii., 23, 24; Mr. Roby, of Manchester, exhorted the church and congregation to be zealous; and Mr. Evans, of Stockport, concluded with prayer.¹

A ministry as honourable as it was lengthy was brought to a sudden termination by Mr. Galland's death, on September 24th, 1843. In the chapel is a handsome marble monument thus inscribed:—

Sacred to the memory
of the
REVEREND JOSEPH GALLAND,
who,
for the period of Thirty Eight Years,
sustained the Pastoral Office in this House.
Faithful and devoted
he lived in the affections of his people,
and the esteem of the public,
and died, deeply lamented,
Sept. 24th, 1843,
in the 66th year of his age.

The other Congregational interests in Oldham and neighbourhood are in great measure memorials of the earnest, self-denying labours of Mr. Galland, and it was in his time—in 1822—that Greenacres Chapel was enlarged and considerably improved. On the 18th of February, 1844, the Rev. Benjamin Longley entered upon his labours as Mr. Galland's successor. He was a native of Sheffield, and was educated at Rotherham College. His first pastorate was at Southwold, in Suffolk, where he was ordained

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1806, p. 525.

October 27th, 1824. Subsequently he laboured at Middlesborough, in Yorkshire, and Armitage, in Staffordshire, his next and last charge being Greenacres. He died January 6th, 1851, in the 54th year of his age. Some time previous to this he had retired from the ministry, being incapacitated by the "mental disorder" which had several times made its appearance in the course of his life. The Rev. G. G. Waddington, a student from Airedale College, followed in August, 1850, being ordained on the 1st and 2nd of October following. The advent of the new minister was followed by two undertakings of considerable magnitude. First, new Sunday Schools, opened in January, 1851, superseded the two small schoolrooms which had been erected in 1812; and on March 4th, 1854, Mr. John Lees laid the corner stone of the present commodious chapel, which took the place of the one erected in 1784. This building, capable of accommodating 800 people, was opened for public worship on Wednesday, August 16th, 1854, when Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, preached in the morning from Matt. v., 47, and Dr. W. Lindsay Alexander, of Edinburgh, in the evening, from Luke xvii., 20; 1 Cor. iv., 20. The opening services were continued on the following Sunday, when the preacher was the Rev. John Waddington, afterwards Dr. Waddington, the historian of Congregationalism, and brother of the pastor. The total cost was £2,323 16s. 5d., towards which the Chapel Building Society granted the sum of £500. This work was barely finished when Mr. Waddington undertook the erection of "Greenacres Grammar School," which has played an important part in the history of educational effort in Oldham. The foundation stone was laid on December 2nd, 1854, by Mr. John Booth, of Lees, and the school was opened by a public soirée on November 29th, 1855, at which John Platt, Esq., of Werneth Park, presided. Mr. Waddington concluded a ministry of much usefulness on August 12th, 1865, and accepted no other pastorate. He is now clerk to the Dewsbury School Board, a position which he has held for over twenty years. His "History of Greenacres Chapel," first published in 1854 and reprinted in 1886, is an excellent work of its kind, and has been found exceedingly helpful in writing this sketch. The Rev. J. J. Williams, from Nayland, in

Suffolk, commenced his ministry in succession to Mr. Waddington, February 3rd, 1867. He resigned November 17th, 1878, having accepted an invitation to the Lowther Street Congregational Church, Carlisle. He was subsequently at Horwich, and is now at Garstang, near Preston.¹

The Rev. Christopher Thompson, educated at Rotherham College, and who had previously had charge for a few years of the Congregational Church at Honley, near Huddersfield, entered upon his labours at Greenacres, July 6th, 1879. He resigned November 20th, 1890, and was followed on April 13th, 1891, by the present minister, the Rev. T. K. Higgs, M.A., from Withington, Manchester.² It was during the pastorate of Mr. Thompson that a new parsonage was erected; and also, in 1890, new Sunday Schools, to accommodate 600 scholars, were put up, at a cost of £2,500.

Greenacres Congregational Church is one of the few Nonconformist churches in Lancashire which was proof against the Arianism of last century, which eventually landed so many of these old Nonconformist foundations in Unitarianism. It is supposed that Mr. Harrop's teachings ran in that direction, but he did not remain sufficiently long to leave any impression, and the church has the satisfaction of being able to look back upon an unbroken record of loyalty to evangelical truth.

II.—UNION STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

UNTIL the beginning of the present century the Congregational church at Greenacres was left alone to grapple with the ignorance and irreligion of Oldham and neighbourhood. In the early part of 1807, however, the committee of the newly-formed County Union fixed upon Oldham as one of those places in Lancashire where Evangelistic work should be commenced, and the Rev. J. Galland, of Greenacres, was authorised "to take a room" for the preaching of the gospel. The Rev. George Partington, who had been edu-

¹ Vide vol. iii of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide ante p. 72.

cated by Mr. Roby, and who subsequently became a minister of some eminence both in Lancashire and Derbyshire, was engaged as agent, but after a short time he was removed to Burnley.¹ There is no record of any further effort here until 1815, when the Union committee "applied to the trustees of a chapel then to be disposed of in that town, but the conditions of the sale not corresponding with the terms by which they were limited, they declined the purchase." Disappointed there, a room was rented in Yorkshire Street, over a public house known as the "Sportsman's Arms." "Moss Garret" the place was called, access to which was gained by an outside ladder or uncovered staircase. As an illustration of the rude character of the times, and the perils to which our Congregational forefathers were often exposed in the pursuit of their mission, the following incident is related:—

Whilst one of the preachers who had come from Manchester, and who rode a horse which his brother had ridden at Waterloo, was returning home after Sunday evening service, his horse took fright and galloped off at a high speed. At the end of two miles he saw a man crouching in the road, evidently prepared to grasp the reins and rob the rider, whilst two other men stood at a distance ready to give help, to whom the first one was heard to say: "I can't; he gallops like the devil!" Shortly afterwards the horse broke into a trot, and the rider arrived at home in safety.

The good work grew, and in 1816 a church was formed consisting of eighteen members, and about 1820 the old theatre in Eagle Street was taken as "a more commodious place of worship." At this time the Rev. N. Scholefield had charge of Oldham and district, but "the toils of travelling to exchange with ministers in the district on every alternate Sabbath" led to his retirement after a few months² from a congregation which had

¹ Vide vols. ii. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² From Urwick's "Nonconformity in Cheshire" (p. 181) the following respecting Mr. Scholefield is extracted: "In 1819, however, the Rev. Nathanael Scholefield, who had been pastor of the church at Henley-on-Thames for upwards of twenty-five years, became their [churches at Over and Minshull] stated minister and pastor. He had been induced to come into Lancashire by Mr. Roby, of Manchester, principally because of the extensive field of labour offered him there, and he was for a short time engaged with much acceptance and success in Oldham, but his zeal and devotion becoming known to the

“acquired a greater degree of consistency and stability.” From the theatre the people removed to a large room in Queen Street, but the “access was bad, the room was uncomfortable, and so they were fain to resort again to the old theatre.” Stated ministers and students from the Blackburn Academy supplied the pulpit until 1821, when it is said that a Mr. Harris¹ laboured acceptably during the greater part of the year, preaching “in four surrounding populous villages to attentive congregations.” Hopes of a new chapel often raised since the commencement of the cause were as often disappointed until 1823, when the foundation stone was laid. A strong wind, however, blew down the east gable before the building was completed, and at the same time “the cause was deserted by several from whom the greatest pecuniary aid was expected.” On the 10th of October, 1823, however, the chapel was opened for public worship, of which event we have the following record :—

Oct. 10 [1823]. A new Independent Chapel was opened at Oldham, in Lancashire. Dr. Raffles and Mr. Roby preached in the afternoon and evening; the other parts of the services were conducted by Messrs. Ramsey, Sutcliffe, Senior, Galland, and Fielding; the collections amounted to £33.²

The chapel had sitting accommodation for about 470 people, and cost £1,200. The gallery was pewed, “but not the area. That— with the exception of four pews for grandees, should they take

people of Over, they induced him to supply their pulpit for a season, and a mutual respect arising out of his visit, they invited him to become their pastor. The settlement of Mr. Scholefield was the beginning of good days for the church here. His zeal and earnestness soon drew together a large congregation, and the most lively satisfaction was experienced. But a year had barely run its round when it pleased God to transfer this faithful servant to the ranks of the church triumphant, after a short but severe illness. He had conducted three deeply interesting services on the Sabbath, and on the ensuing Wednesday, after having followed his pastoral duties, although ailing, he held a service in his own house, which was crowded to excess; but in the night he was taken suddenly ill, and in a few days—on the 10th July, 1820—he entered upon his reward.”

¹ Who was this? The Rev. George Harris subsequently settled here. Was this the same person?

² “Evangelical Magazine” for 1824, p. 24.

courage and return under brighter circumstances—was left open for Sabbath School instruction.”¹

Early in 1824 the Rev. George Harris, from Bury, accepted an invitation for twelve months. He was a man of “considerable learning, kind and gentle in his deportment, and very assiduous in his ministerial engagements;” but at the end of the time for which he engaged with the Committee he left.² The Rev. Henry Birch followed in 1827. He was born at Sheffield, educated at Blackburn Academy, and, previous to his coming to Oldham, had laboured a few years at Keighley, in Yorkshire. Like Mr. Harris, he remained only about twelve months, the difficulties which “pressed around the infant cause” preventing “suitable provision” being made for retaining his “acceptable services.” “The attendance at the chapel was now diminished to 100,” writes the Rev. John Hodgson; “the Sunday School was given up, and everything looked gloomy and hopeless.” Mr. Birch subsequently held pastorates at Malpas, Fordingbridge, Paisley, and Ledbury, and died at Sheffield, in 1874, aged seventy-four. He published, amongst other works, a volume entitled “Positive Theology.” At the earnest request of Mr. Roby, the Rev. H. H. Leigh, of Manchester, became the minister in the spring of 1829. Mr. Hodgson writes:—

There was nothing inviting, certainly, in his new sphere of labour.³ The congregation numbered nine persons; and the following Sunday, a new family of six having settled in the town, the congregation amounted to fifteen.

These unfavourable circumstances delayed Mr. Leigh’s ordination until Thursday, May 26th, 1836, on which occasion the Revs.

¹ Historic account by the Rev. John Hodgson, in the “Queen Street Manual” for 1866. For much of the information in this article I am indebted to Mr. Hodgson’s painstaking efforts.

² Vide vol. iii. of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”

³ The first Sunday on which Mr. Leigh preached at Oldham it is said his chapel was greatly encumbered with debt, the people were few in number and very poor, there was much prejudice against them, partly because they had not been able to meet their liabilities in the erection of the chapel, and partly because of their discountenancing the impartation of secular instruction on the Lord’s Day. Mr. Hodgson adds to this the following note: “For in 1833 school rooms were built at the cost of £640, and a Sunday School opened for the religious instruction of the young.”

Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, gave the charge to the minister from 2 Tim. iv., 5; Joseph Galland offered the ordination prayer; John Ely, of Leeds, "delivered the introductory discourse and received the confession of faith"; John Holroyd, of Delph, "introduced the services;" and J. Sutcliffe, of Ashton-under-Lyne, preached to the people in the evening from Rev. ii., 29. Other ministers assisting were the Revs. G. Hoyle, Stalybridge; R. Calvert, Upper Mill; G. Partington, Glossop; R. Ivy, Dukin-



UNION STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

field; and R. Jessop, Hope Chapel, Oldham. Previous to this the church had been dissolved and reorganised on "Scriptural principles;" and in 1836 "through the slow progress of the coach bearing the deputation to the County Union Meeting, and their consequent non-appearance when the case of Oldham came up, the church lost the usual grant." "This deprivation," says Mr. Hodgson, "roused them, invigorated their willingness, called forth their prayers, and liberality, and effort, and was emphatically

to them a crowning blessing. For, to their honour be it known, their pastor suffered no loss; they promptly, and with much self-denial, met the deficiency from their own resources." On the 21st of April, 1841, Mr. Leigh died in the midst of his useful labours. At the commencement of 1843 the Rev. Thomas Brierley, a student from Rotherham College, was appointed to the pastorate. He resigned in October, 1844, and, after labouring a little over twelve months at Warrington, went into the Established Church.¹ From 1844 to 1848 "the church was without pastor, the pulpit being supplied by students, and for a year by the Rev. James Munroe, one of the unattached in Manchester, an arrangement which proved very disastrous to the church, only increasing the dissension which had so long obtained." A new period of prosperity came to the church when the Rev. John Hodgson—a student from Lancashire College—became the minister in July, 1848. On Wednesday, January 3rd, 1849, he was ordained, the charge to the minister being given by Dr. Davidson, of Lancashire College; Dr. Halley, of Manchester, discoursing on the constitution of a Christian church; and the Rev. James Pridie, of Halifax, Mr. Hodgson's former pastor, offering the "designation prayer." In the evening the Rev. James Parsons, of York, delivered to the people "an eloquent and powerful discourse."² On Good Friday, April 6th, 1855, Sir James Watts laid the foundation stone of the present place of worship, which was completed and opened on October 17th of the same year, the preachers being the Revs. James Sherman, of London, and Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool. It provides accommodation for 850 persons, and cost, with organ, &c., £2,810, towards which the Chapel Building Society gave £700. On the 20th of October, 1877, Sir James Watts laid the foundation stone of the admirable new school buildings, which were opened on October 13th, 1878, when the Rev. Professor Scott, LL.B., of Lancashire College, preached morning and evening, the pastor conducting a children's service in the afternoon. The cost was about £6,000, and at the time of opening about half the amount had to be raised. On the 21st of

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² "Evangelical Magazine" for 1849. p. 257.

November, 1883, Mr. Hodgson resigned his charge, and on the 16th of January following the deacons handed to him the sum of £80 in addition to his salary, as a mark of esteem "previous to his leaving Oldham." During the long period of thirty-five years Mr. Hodgson laboured in Oldham with a patient courage and unvarying fidelity rarely equalled, leaving as memorials of a rich ministry a strong and healthy church, handsome and commodious schools and chapel, and numerous Congregational interests in and out of the town, which he either originated or to which he had given substantial help. He has sought no other charge, and is now living in retirement at Fenay Bridge, near Huddersfield. The Rev. Wm. Evans, a student from Lancashire College, was called to succeed Mr. Hodgson in 1885. To the great regret of his people, Mr. Evans in 1892 accepted an invitation from the Victoria Street Church, Blackpool, as successor to the Rev. James Wayman, who had removed to London. The Union Street pulpit is still vacant.

III.—HOPE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

"IN 1823, at the east end of the town, then called Greenacres Moor, there was a growing population without the means of grace. A Congregationalist in the neighbourhood—Mr. Samuel Lees, of Soho Ironworks—seeing the people pass along unpaved and undrained roads in order to reach Greenacres Chapel, resolved that this kind of thing should no longer continue. "Thus," says the Rev. R. M. Davies, "Hope Chapel originated." It was built in 1823, Mr. Lees undertaking the entire responsibility, and was opened on June 24th of the next year, the preachers being the Revs. James Pridie, then of Manchester, and William Vint, of Idle. The sitting accommodation was for about 600. The first minister was the Rev. John Fox, a teacher in Stockport, who remained but a short time. On his retirement a number of his admirers seceded, and erected for him Providence Chapel, Regent Street, in 1829. The Rev. Joseph Glendenning, a student from Idle Academy, was called to the vacant church in the midsummer of 1828. He is described as a refined, thoughtful, and sensitive man, during whose ministry a church was formed, the Revs. John Ely, then at Rochdale, and John Holroyd, of Delph, giving the necessary assistance. After about six years Mr. Glendenning removed to

Knaresborough, where he was ordained August 27th, 1835, and where he died in 1839. The Rev. Richard Jessop, from Pocklington, followed in 1836. "For a few years," says Mr. Davies, "his ministry drew considerable congregations, when he came into collision with some of his principal supporters, which induced him to accept an invitation to a church at Rothwell (or Rowell), in 1842." Subsequently he laboured for several years at Warrington, and died March 1st, 1869.¹ In June, 1843, the Rev. R. M. Davies began his labours in succession to Mr. Jessop. As the history of Hope Chapel from this period is mainly the story of Mr. Davies's life, and as he occupies a unique position in the Congregational ministry of Lancashire, the reader will doubtless welcome whatever information can be given about him. When a young man he held a situation full of promise in a commercial house in Manchester, and was a member of Dr. McAll's church, Mosley Street. It was a letter written by the Doctor from his sick room, one of the last he ever penned, urging him to enter the ministry, which led Mr. Davies to renounce a commercial life, and seek admission into the Blackburn Academy, in June, 1839. On the completion of his college course he refused the tempting offers of several churches, and, as already intimated, settled at Oldham in 1843. He found the people depressed, the congregations seldom exceeding fifty or sixty persons, school nearly empty, and a church with thirteen members. Earnest work, however, speedily told in every direction, and the chapel, which was proved to be unsafe, owing to dry rot, was repaired and considerably enlarged, at a cost of £900, the year after his settlement. On Monday, September 2nd, 1844, Mr. Davies was ordained, when the Rev. John Birt (Baptist), Oldham, took the introductory services; the Rev. Richard Fletcher, Manchester, delivered the introductory discourse; the Rev. Dr. Nolan, Manchester, asked the usual questions; the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, Ashton-under-Lyne, offered the ordination prayer; and "a solemn and impressive charge to the minister" was given by the Rev. Dr. Raffles,² of Liverpool. In the evening the sermon to the people

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² It is related that Mr. Davies was at that time a delicate looking young man, and so fragile in appearance that Dr. Raffles said to the people, "You have got a very nice promising young man, but I fear you'll not keep him long." A prophesy which all Lancashire Congregationalists will rejoice to know has not been fulfilled.

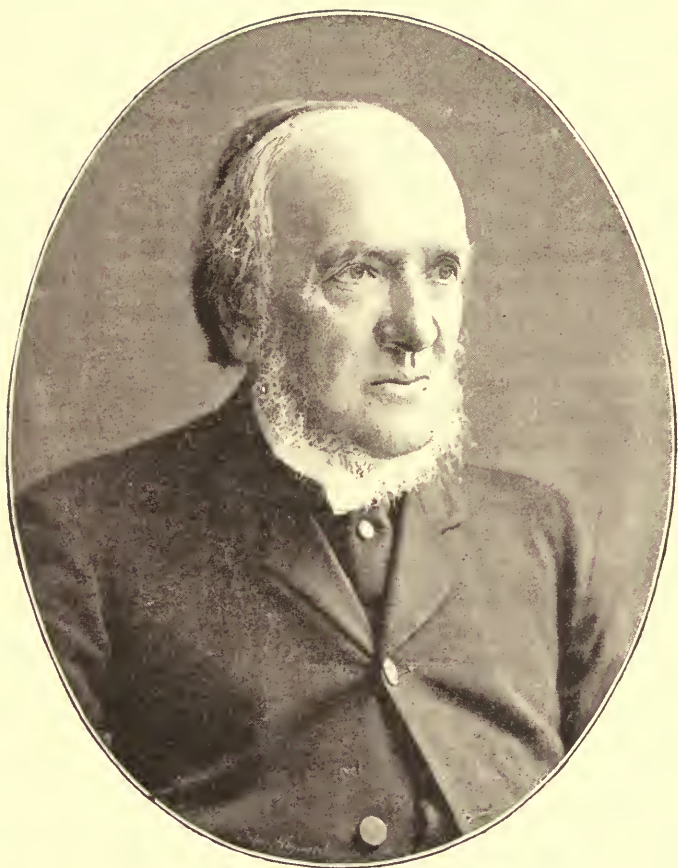


HOPE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OLDHAM.

was preached by the Rev. D. E. Ford, of Salford, other ministers assisting being the Revs. T. Brierley, Oldham; R. Wolstenholme, Springhead; J. Harrison, Heywood; J. Hughes, Huddersfield; and R. Stephens, Todmorden. In 1852 new schoolrooms were built, and on July 22nd, 1865, the foundation stone of the present Hope Chapel was laid. At the opening services, held in July, 1866, the preachers were the Revs. E. Mellor, M.A., J. G. Rogers, B.A., Dr. McKerrow, of Manchester, and the pastor. The cost was about £5,000, and the number of sittings provided was 1,100, nearly all of which were taken up within twelve months after the opening services. In June of this year Mr. Davies will complete his fifty years' pastorate at Oldham,¹ and it is intended to celebrate the Jubilee by important alterations and improvements in both chapel and school, at a cost of £4,000, that his successor may find everything in the best possible condition. Hope Chapel, like many other town and city places of worship, has changed its surroundings very considerably since its erection nearly thirty years ago. The removal of dwellings for the erection of offices and warehouses has scattered the people, yet many of them come from afar, influenced not less by their attachment to the minister than the place. During his long and honourable career his people have given to him many substantial tokens of their affection. After a ministry of fourteen years they presented him with £100; at the end of twenty-one years with a magnificent solid silver tea and coffee service, thus inscribed:—

Presented to
The Revd. R. M. DAVIES,
by the Ladies of his Congregation,
at the close of the
Twenty-first Year of his
happy and successful ministry
in Hope Chapel, Oldham,
27th June, 1864.

¹ Since the above was written the church has celebrated the Jubilee of its pastor. The Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., of London, an old personal friend, preached on Sunday, June 25th; and on the Monday evening following testimony was borne to the value of Mr. Davies's work by the chairman (Alderman Noton, Mayor of Oldham), the Revs. T. K. Higgs, M.A., Wm. Evans (Blackpool), T. Green, M.A. (Ashton-under-Lyne), James McDougall (Manchester), J. G. Rogers, B.A., Wm. Hewgill, M.A. (Farnworth), and T. Willis (Manchester).



Yours sincerely,
R. M. Davis

At the end of thirty years he received an address with a purse containing £400; and at the end of forty years another gift of £400. During his residence in Oldham he has been to the fore in all the public life of the town, filling many positions of trust and responsibility. The Cotton Famine, which brought such distress to Lancashire, was nowhere more severely felt than in Oldham, and a special Congregational Relief Fund was established to meet the needs of Congregationalists throughout the cotton district. The amount of labour which this brought to Mr. Davies, who acted as Secretary, will be evident from the fact that there passed through his hands more than £30,000 in money, and in one day garments and materials for garments exceeding half a ton in weight. Mr. Davies also got up a special fund at the same time, which exceeded £3,000, to help Congregational ministers in country districts, whose incomes had suffered serious diminution owing to the pressure of the times. When the Education Act was passed in 1870, Oldham was one of the first towns to apply its provisions. Mr. Davies was elected a member of the Board, a position which he retained for twenty-one years, during eighteen of which he occupied, with credit to himself and advantage to the institution, the office of chairman. At the last election, prompted by the felt infirmities incident to advanced years, he reluctantly declined to continue his connection with the work, a determination which called forth many expressions of grateful appreciation and sincere regret. Twenty-five years ago Oldham had no Infirmary; the establishment of one was projected, but the project was met by formidable opposition, and amongst those who sought to allay adverse feeling Mr. Davies was prominent. Suitable buildings were eventually erected and work was begun; and from the first Mr. Davies has been, and still is, one of its most interested and self-denying governors. In other local movements for the promotion of educational and benevolent objects he has ever been ready to take his full share of toil and responsibility. In addition to all this, from the commencement of his ministerial life he has taken a deep and living interest in all denominational movements. The County Union showed its appreciation of his long and faithful services by calling him to the President's chair¹ in 1880, and again

¹ It is a matter of regret to many of his friends that Mr. Davies has twice refused to be put in nomination for the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, an honour to which no one is more justly entitled.

more signally on March 6th, 1889, when he was presented with a handsomely bound album address, together with £550. A sentence or two from this address deserve insertion :—

Your membership began as far back as eighteen hundred and forty-four, and two years afterwards you were chosen to serve on the Executive Committee. During the forty-five years which have elapsed you have, through the grace of God, revealed sterling qualities of heart and mind, exhibited a most exemplary character, and pursued a remarkably useful life, thus endearing yourself to those with whom you have been associated, and gaining for yourself an honoured place in the Church of Christ. . . . Your deep interest in Congregational ministers and churches has also been made clearly manifest by your disinterested and generous action as Secretary of the Chapel Building Society and the Woodward Trusts. By the latter the heart and home of many a minister have been cheered, and by the former means have been provided whereby many new churches and schools have been erected, thus giving a stimulus to the further extension of the kingdom of Christ.

It has already been stated that Mr. Davies occupies a unique position in the Lancashire Congregational ministry past and present. A fifty-years' pastorate is not common ; indeed, I do not remember to have met with any other in my researches. It was the deep desire of Dr. Raffles to complete his jubilee year at Liverpool, but failing health compelled him to resign as he entered upon it. Mr. Davies, however, has been permitted to complete half a century of service in his first and only church, and he has the satisfaction of knowing that when he shall withdraw, and enter upon the rest he has so well earned, he will leave a large and vigorous church to his successor. Not himself only, but the church and county, are to be congratulated upon the rich lessons which such a life and ministry offer.

IV.—REGENT STREET, TOWNFIELD, AND DERKER
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

IN 1829 the Rev. John Fox, between whom and some of his people friction had arisen, seceded from Hope Chapel, and a small place of worship was built for him in Regent Street. Providence Chapel, as it was called, was opened March 14th, 1830, with sitting accommodation for over 500 persons. In 1847 Mr. Fox removed to Eccleshill, near Bradford, but after three years he returned to Oldham, and retained his pastorate with success until his death. In 1864 the Rev. J. T. Carrodus became the minister, and continued to be such until 1870. His successor in 1873 was the Rev. W. H. McKenny, who remained until 1878, when he resigned and entered the Free Church of England. For some time the pulpit was supplied by Messrs. Southward, Risque, and Thompson, of Manchester, and in 1885 the Rev. B. P. Senior, a student from Airedale College, became the minister. In 1888 he accepted the invitation from the Congregational Church at Howdon, Northumberland, and is now at Heyside, near Oldham. The present minister is the Rev. H. T. Mark, B.A., a student from Lancashire College, who began his labours here in 1889.

In 1850 James Platt, Esq., laid the foundation stone of a new school at Townfield, which was opened on December 1st of that year, when the Rev. R. M. Davies was the afternoon preacher, and the Rev. John Birt, Baptist minister, preached in the evening. The building was erected as a school of all denominations, and was part of a Sunday School movement which appeared in Oldham as early as 1783, three years after the first Sunday School was established by Robert Raikes in Gloucester. The new building had become necessary because its predecessor at Ferney Bank was inconvenient and unhealthy, being simply a rude garret, access to which was by means of a rickety pair of stairs. Towards this new effort each teacher promised a guinea, to be paid by instalments, and it deserves to be recorded that one of the most ardent supporters of the movement was Mr. Archibald Booth, father of the late Mr. Archibald Booth, who raised a considerable sum of money by subscriptions. The building at this time was only one

storey high, and the workers were associated with different places of worship in the town. The desire for service, however, in their own school appeared and deepened with the years, and eventually short Sunday afternoon addresses and "Exhortations" every alternate Sunday evening were adopted. In July, 1863, the school was let at the rate of £4 per annum to the Methodist New Connexion, Union Street, for Sunday evening services, which resulted in several of the workers joining the church there. A church of the Methodist New Connexion order was formed in May, 1866, when sixty-five persons entered into fellowship, and on the 17th of May in the following year the church severed itself from that body, and assumed the name of "Townfield Christian Society." The pulpit at this time was supplied by lay preachers, one of whom, Mr. T. Hannam, is especially held in loving memory by the people. In 1868 the need of better accommodation for public worship was felt, and it was resolved to add a second storey to the building which should serve the purpose of a chapel. The work was taken in hand, and completed in that year, being opened on October 4th, the preachers being the Revs. J. J. Williams, of Greenacres, and Wm. Stokes, of Manchester. The cost was £1,400, and accommodation was provided for over 400 persons. On March 12th, 1872, the following advertisement appeared in several public papers:—

WANTED, a Minister, in connection with a Methodist Church, salary about £80 per annum; all applications, with testimonials, references, &c., to be sent in on or before Monday, April 8th, 1872, to Archibald Booth, Stationer, &c., 24, Huddersfield Road, Oldham. The appointment will be made on Monday, May 13th, 1872.

Out of the many applicants the Rev. Thomas Colclough, from Newcastle-under-Lyme, who had previously held no pastorate, was unanimously chosen, and on the first Sabbath of the following June he entered upon his labours as pastor. The isolated position of both church and minister, being outside all religious denominations, led them shortly afterwards to look in the direction of Congregationalism. Accordingly, on Sunday, September 13th, 1874, the members of the "Townfield Christian Society" were formed into a Congregational church, on which occasion the Rev.

R. M. Davies presided, and addresses were given by the Revs. J. Hodgson and E. Armitage, M.A. After the administration of the Lord's Supper the newly-formed church called Mr. Colclough to the pastorate, and he was ordained on Easter Monday in the year following. Shortly afterwards both minister and church were welcomed into the Lancashire Congregational Union. Mr. Colclough resigned in October, 1878, having accepted an invitation from the church at Hollinwood. The Rev. B. Nightingale, a student from Lancashire College, and author of this work, entered upon the pastorate of the church on the second Sunday of July, 1879. He was ordained on Monday, October 27th, following, on which occasion the Revs. J. Hodgson presided; Dr. Thomson, of Manchester, expounded Congregational principles; Professor Scott, B.A., LL.B., Principal of Lancashire College, delivered the charge to the minister; J. Robinson, Ramsbottom, put the usual questions; R. M. Davies offered the ordination prayer; and E. Armitage, M.A., concluded the service with prayer. On the Wednesday following the Rev. J. McDougall, of Darwen (Mr. Nightingale's former pastor), preached the sermon to the people. In April, 1883, Mr. Nightingale removed to Farnworth, and subsequently to Preston, where he still labours.¹ In the following year the Rev. T. Colclough returned to his old charge at Townfield, which he held until May, 1893, when he resigned. The church is now without a pastor.

Derker Congregational Church is the result of a secession from Townfield, which took place in 1883. The secession was caused by differences of opinion respecting a site for a new chapel, which for some time had been felt needful, and partly through the action of the trustees, who claimed the right to complete financial control. The secessionists met for worship in the Co-operative Hall, Greenacres, the first services there being held on August 5th, 1883. The formal opening of the Hall for public worship in connection with the movement took place on Sunday, September 16th following, when the preachers were the Revs. B. Nightingale and E. Armitage, M.A. The first church meeting was held on August 19th, 1883, and on Saturday, July 25th, 1885, the foundation stone of the present Derker Sunday School

¹ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

was laid by Joshua W. Radcliffe, Esq., Mayor of the town. The building was completed and opened for worship on Tuesday evening, April 6th, 1886, by Dr. Macfadyen, and on the two following Sundays the preachers were the Revs. Dr. Hodgson, C. Thompson, S. Firth, and W. Thomas. It is a handsome structure, and contains accommodation for 450 persons. The cost was about £2,000. No pastor was appointed until 1890, when the Rev. T. O. Williams, a student from Lancashire College, began his ministry. He resigned in May, 1893, and the pulpit is still vacant. Mr. Williams has recently accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the Brookfield Congregational Church, Glossop.

V.—WERNETH, ASHTON ROAD, AND HOLLINWOOD
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

WERNETH Congregational Church owes its existence to the Union Street Congregational Church, during the pastorate of the Rev. John Hodgson. The need of another chapel in that part of Oldham had long been felt, and eventually the Lecture Hall of the Mechanics' Institution was rented, and a committee of management appointed by the Union Street Church. The room was opened for worship in August, 1868, and in the following November a Sunday School was begun. In 1870 a separate church was formed, and the Union Street Church ceased to exercise any supervision over the cause. The Rev. William Duthie, a student from New College, London, and who had spent two years at Nottingham Institute, was elected the first pastor, beginning his duties as such on May 21st, 1871. Three years afterwards the present school chapel, with sitting accommodation for 400 persons, was erected. Its cost was about £2,600, and towards this sum the Chapel Building Society promised £300. Mr. Duthie died July 27th, 1875, aged twenty-seven years. His successor was the Rev. D. Inglis, B.A., who had been educated at Nottingham Institute and Lancashire College, and who began his duties as second minister of the church in 1876. In 1879 he removed to Douglas, Isle of Man, where he is still the pastor. The present minister is

the Rev. J. R. Phillips, who removed from Littleborough in 1879 to succeed Mr. Inglis here.¹

The interest at Ashton Road was commenced in 1878, the place of meeting being the upper room of a cottage in Boston Street, and after a short time the Rev. John Hodgson undertook the superintendence of the work, preaching on the third Sunday in every month and conducting the week night service on the previous Wednesday. A grant was made from the funds of the County Union, and help was rendered by the Congregational ministers of the town. In 1880 the present school chapel, giving accommodation for 300 worshippers, was erected on a site which had been secured by the Rev. R. M. Davies, and was opened in October of that year. The cost was about £1,100, towards which the Chapel Building Society granted the sum of £200. In October, 1881, a branch church was formed, consisting of twenty-five members, and in 1888 the present minister—the Rev. Wilson Murray, a student from Nottingham Institute—began his labours. The church is still in association with Union Street, and has been so from the beginning, with the exception of a short period after the removal of Mr. Hodgson, when the Rev. J. R. Phillips, of Werneth, undertook its superintendence. The church is a recipient from the Union Funds. Ground has been enclosed, upon which it is proposed to erect a new chapel, when the present building will be used for school purposes.

About 1850 the Rev. R. M. Davies took an upper room at Hollinwood, then a "much neglected village," and began to hold services there, the County Union supporting the effort by a generous grant. Some two years after "a good room, suitable for preaching and Sunday School teaching," was erected, with accommodation for 200 persons, and a "resident supply" was engaged to "occupy the pulpit, and labour among the large surrounding population." This "supply" was the Rev. George Dunn, from Ellenthorp and Boroughbridge, who discharged the duties of minister from 1851 to 1855, removing in the latter year to Edgworth.² The County Union Report, ending April, 1855, tells of a "deplorable" state of things, of a "fearful decline," and the

¹ Vide vol. iii, of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Ibid.

arrival of a "crisis"; and states that the station had been placed under the superintendence of the Rev. John Hodgson. By the "kind efforts and liberality" of Mr. Jon. Lees, of Manchester, an embarrassing debt was removed in 1856, and in the following year the Rev. Richard Williams became the minister. He was a native of Oldham, brought up as a Primitive Methodist, labouring with much acceptance in that communion as a local preacher for several years, but becoming dissatisfied with its polity and doctrine, joined Mr. Hodgson's church at Union Street. At his request and that of Mr. Davies he undertook to labour at Hollinwood, and, feeling his need of training, in 1861 obtained admission into Lancashire College for a "limited course of study." Here he continued for three years, carrying on his work at the same time at Hollinwood. His ministry was followed with so much success that a larger building became necessary, and on Good Friday, 1866, the present chapel was opened for public worship. It is described as occupying "one of the best situations on the highway between Manchester and Oldham," having a tower at the west angle "66 feet high," sitting accommodation for about 800 persons, its cost being £1,800, towards which the Chapel Building Society voted £500. In 1871 Hollinwood "no longer asks a grant from the Union" runs the Report, and shortly after the devoted pastor's labours were terminated by death. At the age of forty-one years Mr. Williams passed away to his reward, May 7th, 1872. In the same year the Rev. H. Hustwick, from Market Drayton, followed, and remained until 1877, when he removed to Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, where he still resides without charge. His successor, in 1879, was the Rev. T. Colclough, from Townfield. The church had now become much reduced, necessitating a renewal of assistance from the Union Funds. Mr. Colclough returned to Townfield in 1884, being succeeded in the following year by the Rev. A. Hall, who is still the minister.¹ During the ministry of Mr. Williams the church had two out stations. At Lane Ends, about a mile and a half from the chapel, he opened a place in 1866, preaching every Sunday afternoon and on alternate Thursday evenings. A Sunday School was established, which

¹ Vide vol i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity;" also ante p. 199.

flourished considerably. Two years afterwards he commenced to labour at Macedonia, Failsworth, where a school chapel was opened in 1868. The cost was about £700, towards which the Chapel Building Society voted £200; and provision was made for seating 350 persons. Lane Ends has disappeared from the list of Congregational preaching places, but Macedonia is still worked with considerable vigour, though no longer in association with Hollinwood.

VI.—ROYTON, SHAW, AND HEYSIDE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

ROYTON, with which for many generations were connected the ancient families of Radcliffe and Byron, lies a mile to the north of Oldham. The County Union Report, ending April, 1847, says that in accordance with a resolution passed at the last annual meeting, a beginning had been made both at Royton and Shaw. A preacher was sent for a month on trial "to officiate in a schoolroom already erected there;" but, differences arising, the work had to be suspended. On Sunday, February 18th, 1855, work was recommenced, services being held in the Temperance Seminary. The promoters were the Rev. John Harrison, of Heywood, representing the County Union, and Robert Barker, overlooker, Royton, by "whose efforts for the first twelve months the interest was sustained." At Shaw, which was joined with Royton, a small chapel was purchased from the Wesleyans, and on the first Sunday in August, 1856, the Rev. Mark Dixon, a student from Rotherham College, entered upon his duties as pastor of the two places. A church was formed of friends from Royton and Shaw in March, 1857, when the Revs. John Hodgson, of Oldham, and Wm. Spencer, of Rochdale, officiated. In the following August Mr. Dixon accepted an appointment in connection with the Colonial Missionary Society, and went out to South Adelaide. For the next nine or ten months the Rev. R. M. Davies provided pulpit supplies, and gave the church the benefit of his counsel, and in June, 1858, the Rev. William Anderson became the minister. He was educated at Glasgow, and had previously laboured a few years at

Chesterfield. He resigned his double charge at Royton and Shaw in March, 1861, and removed to Tooting, Surrey, where he became a Presbyterian. Readers of recent religious literature will be familiar with the name of Dr. Anderson, his attempt to carry Defoe's Memorial Chapel over to the Presbyterian body, and the injunction of Mr. Justice Kekewich, by which he ceased to be the minister there, but they may not know that he was formerly the pastor of Royton Congregational Church. After his removal Shaw and Royton ceased to be connected, and the Royton Church placed itself under the care of the Rev. John Hodgson.

On the 3rd of December, 1864, Mr. Henry Lee laid the corner stone of the new church in Pickford Street (now Middleton Road),



ROYTON OLD HALL.

which was opened in May, 1866, when the Revs. J. A. Macfadyen, M.A., and Prof. Scott were the preachers. The cost was about £1,800, towards which the Bicentenary Committee promised £500, and the accommodation is for 600 persons. The Rev. Joshua Sidebottom, educated at Rotherham, and for a few years minister at Bucklow Hill, commenced his labours at Royton on December 14th, 1866, and at the same time the Union Street Church ceased its superintendence of the church. In 1872 the school buildings were erected, and in October of the same year, Mr. Sidebottom removed to Stockton-on-Tees. Subsequently, he entered the Presbyterian denomination, but is now pastor of the Congrega-

tional Church at Brightside, near Sheffield. The Rev. S. R. Noble, a student from Lancashire College, followed in January, 1873. In 1876 the church ceased to be a recipient from the funds of the County Union, and in the same year, failing health compelled the pastor to seek a warmer climate. He accepted the invitation of the Howe Memorial Church, Torrington, Devon, and died suddenly on August 16th, 1877, at the age of thirty-five years. The Rev. Philip Barnes, educated at Nottingham, and for a few years at Ashton-on-Mersey, in Cheshire, succeeded Mr. Noble in May, 1877. He remained until Christmas, 1888, when he removed to Plashet Park, London, where he still labours. The present minister, the Rev. A. J. Bamford, B.A., assumed the pastorate here in October, 1889. He was educated at New College, and had previously laboured in Calcutta, India, and Shanghai, China. Mr. Bamford is the author of "Turbans and Tails," and during his residence in India, was one of the defendants in the "Calcutta Preaching Case," which for sometime occupied a foremost place in all the Indian papers, and was not unnoticed at home.

After the separation from Royton, the Rev. Reuben Seddon was appointed minister at Shaw in 1861. He remained only about twelve months, removing to Smallbridge.¹ In 1866 Shaw and Milnrow were placed under the supervision of the Rev. G. Snashall, B.A., of Rochdale, and shortly afterwards Shaw disappears from the list of Union stations. In 1885, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the County Union and the Oldham Ministers and Deacons' Association, a second attempt was made to plant Congregationalism at Shaw. Opening services were held in the Co-operative Hall on July 19th, by the Revs. C. Thompson, of Greenacres, and Wm. Thomas, of Waterhead. On the following Sunday a Sunday School was opened, Miss Hall generously providing books and other necessary things, and the Greenacres Church undertook the supervision of the cause for twelve months. The Rev. Wm. Woodburn was appointed resident Evangelist, and in 1886, an iron chapel, capable of accommodating about 200 persons, was erected at a cost of £290. Mr. Woodburn removed in 1889, and was followed by

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

the Rev. J. S. Miller, educated at the Edinburgh Theological Hall, and formerly of Coleraine. He held the pastorate until 1892, when he resigned; and the present minister, the Rev. James Bridie, a student from Nottingham Institute, entered upon his duties on the first Sunday in July, 1893.¹ A new chapel is shortly to be erected, and it deserves to be mentioned that Miss Hall is a generous friend to the cause. The church is a recipient from the Union Funds.

Heyside Congregational Church is largely the result of the long and self-denying labours of Mr. John Dunkerley. In 1842 a person named Wild, who owned property in the village, which was then "notorious for wickedness of the vilest description," and who was a Wesleyan local preacher, seceded from that body and commenced preaching in a room of which he was owner. Neighbouring ministers were invited to give their help, and amongst those who did so was the Rev. Joseph Galland, of Greenacres. Subsequently Mr. Wild became a sort of infidel lecturer, and the preaching room was closed. Before his death, however, he permitted it to be reopened, and several denominations attempted to gain a footing in the village, but failed. In the latter part of 1842 Mr. John Dunkerley was visiting one Sunday afternoon at the house of a family named Bradbury, formerly connected with the Waterhead Sunday School, and in the evening he was requested to conduct services. This led to fortnightly visits for religious worship, and the house becoming too small application was made for the use of a room which had formerly been occupied as a Day and Sunday School, but for some time had been closed. The application, at first refused, was afterwards granted, and a congregation was formed and a school organised. In 1851 new school-rooms were erected, and the Rev. R. M. Davies, who had been interested in the movement almost from the commencement, took part in the opening services. In 1865 a branch church was formed in connection with Hope Chapel, the Rev. R. M. Davies agreeing to administer the Lord's Supper once a month. Corner stones of the present chapel were laid on May 1st, 1880, by Mrs.

¹ Mr. Bridie's labours have been cut short by death since the above was written. The sad event took place on Thursday, August 3rd, when he was in his 36th year.

Abraham Buckley, who gave £50 in addition to a legacy of £50 by her late husband; and by Mr. Alderman William Bodden, who gave £25. Mr. Davies and his son, Mr. C. S. Davies, held themselves responsible for £100, Mr. Davies undertook to obtain £150 from the Chapel Building Society, and Mrs. Buckley gave an additional £25, the last required, so that the chapel was opened free from debt. The services in connection with that event took place on the 14th of November, 1880, when two sermons were preached by the Rev. R. M. Davies. The accommodation provided is for 450 persons. Mr. Dunkerley continued to serve the church until 1889, when he resigned. For thirty-four years his services were "purely gratuitous," during the greater part of which he worked at the Iron Foundry of Mr. Eli Lees, and in all the future years of this church Mr. Dunkerley's name will be gratefully remembered because of his long and useful labours. The present minister is the Rev. B. P. Senior, formerly of Regent Street, Oldham. He entered upon his duties as such in 1891, since which time the church has received a grant from the Union Funds.

VII.—WATERHEAD, PASTURES, AND SPRINGHEAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

IN 1837 Mr. James Dunkerley, senior, hired two small upper rooms of two cottages belonging to Mr. James Winterbottom, as a Sunday School and preaching station in connection with the Greenacres Church. Here the Rev. Joseph Galland conducted service on Sunday evenings until his death. The following are the names of members of the Greenacres Church and congregation who came to teach in the school and interest themselves in the new undertaking: Charles Beswick, James Taylor, Samuel Kershaw, Daniel Taylor, John Beaumont, George Beaumont, Timothy Buckley, Sarah Beaumont, Ann Beaumont, Mary Buckley, Rachael Wilde, and Eliza Beswick. To this list of workers must be added the name of Mr. John Dunkerley, whose labours at Heyside have been previously referred to. Mr. Galland died in 1843, and during the ministry of his successor

the Waterhead School ceased its connection with Greenacres, the teachers and others who were in fellowship there being transferred to Hope Chapel, under the pastoral care of the Rev. R. M. Davies. In 1844 an unused School Chapel in Heywood Street, built by the New Connexion Methodists, was secured as a meeting place, and held for about three years. At the end of that period, the chapel having been purchased by the Primitive Methodists, the little congregation was served with notice to quit. This led to the erection of a school in Providence Street, at a cost of £250, with accommodation for 300 persons. The opening services were held on August 8th, 1847, when Dr. Nolan, of Manchester, preached in the morning, and the Rev. R. M. Davies in the evening. The Sunday evening services at this time were conducted principally by laymen, prominent amongst these being Mr. Kershaw, Mr. Daniel Taylor, and Mr. John Dunkerley. In May, 1864, a branch church was formed in connection with the Union Street Church, Mr. Hodgson taking the pastoral oversight, and in the same year a grant of £15 was made from the funds of the County Union. On Saturday, July 17th, 1869, James Newton, Esq., laid the foundation stone of a new chapel, and it deserves to be recorded in connection with this that the "great expense of levelling was saved by the voluntary labour of the young men of the school. They worked with untiring vigour with pick and spade and barrow after their work in the mills was over, and even after daylight was gone."¹ The building was opened in June, 1870, when Dr. Halley preached in the afternoon, and Dr. Mellor at night. Its cost was about £2,500, towards which the Chapel Building Society gave £400, and the sitting accommodation is for about 600 persons. In the following year the church ceased to be a recipient from the Union Funds. The Rev. E. Armitage, M.A., a student from Lancashire College, accepted the invitation of the church to become its first pastor in May, 1872, and at the same time a letter was received from the Union Street Church declaring the Waterhead Church to be "completely independent, and committing them, with their new pastor, to the grace of God." On May 8th, 1875, the foundation stone of new school buildings, to hold 400 scholars and cost about £1,600, was laid by Wm.

¹ Waddington's "Historical and Biographical Notices," p. 418.

Armitage, Esq., the pastor's father; and in November, 1880, Mr Armitage entered the minister's house, which had cost £1,100. In February, 1883, he removed to Rotherham, having accepted the pastorate of the Congregational Church there, and is now one of the Professors of the Yorkshire United College, Bradford. It ought to be stated that Professor Armitage and his gifted wife are largely responsible for the new spirit of Missionary enthusiasm which has visited many of our churches, and led to the "Forward Movement" of the London Missionary Society. The Rev. Wm. Thomas, a student from Lancashire College, succeeded Mr. Armitage in June, 1884. His useful ministry was concluded in 1892, having offered himself to the London Missionary Society for service in Central Africa. Mr. Thomas sailed for Lake Tanganyika in May, 1893, carrying with him the prayers and sympathies of many friends to the difficult post of duty which he has courageously chosen. The present minister is the Rev. L. Hartley. He was educated at Airedale, had previously laboured at Malton, in Yorkshire, and assumed the present pastorate in February, 1893.

The Congregational Church at Pastures, a little farther north than Waterhead, originated some forty years ago. It grew out of a secession from Doctor Lane School; which, originally a school of all denominations, some who attended endeavoured to make sectarian. Those who disapproved of this step eventually left, and began to hold meetings in the reeling room of Pastures Mill, about 150 yards from the place where the present chapel stands. This was in 1854, and in 1856 a chapel was erected, with sitting accommodation for 350 persons. At first it was used only as a Sunday School, the friends going for worship to Springhead Congregational Church; but eventually it was thought desirable to separate from Springhead, and have preaching services in their own building. This led to a little friction between the two places, which happily with the march of years has passed completely away. The church was formed about 1856, some twelve persons entering into fellowship, and the pulpit was supplied by "various," until July, 1890, when the Rev. A. H. Whiteley, a student from Nottingham Institute, became the first minister. The Waterhead Congregational Church promised to exercise some

supervision over the cause, and a grant was obtained from the funds of the County Union. Mr. Whiteley left in September, 1892, having accepted an invitation from the Congregational Church at Westley Place, Great Horton, Bradford, where he still labours. The present minister, the Rev. John Walker, also a student from Nottingham Institute, succeeded in January, 1893. It may be added that Doctor Lane School eventually became a Church School. It has since been rebuilt, and the inscription which declared its unsectarian character, and which formerly stood in the front of the building, has been put behind.

Springhead Congregational Church, on the Yorkshire border, took its rise, though not in its present form, at the beginning of the century. It originated in a house called "Stopes"; afterwards a chapel, three windows long and two storeys high, was built and opened for worship in 1807. Two good men,¹ John Buckley and Joseph Winterbottom, who had left the New Connexion Methodists "in consequence of having adopted the views of the Independents with regard to the doctrine of imputed righteousness," were the first preachers. They conducted services alternatively at Springhead and Upper Mill, which is a few miles in the sister county of York. "Morning service," writes Mr. J. E. Thornton, "did not commence till about a quarter to eleven o'clock, and was protracted sometimes till a quarter to one, and brought to an abrupt termination by the singing of the Doxology. Then, in the vernacular of an old man, 'were'n use't to ceawer reawnd stove till abeaut two o'clock, an' then begin agen.'"² In 1818 the old Springhead Sunday School was erected, previous to which time the scholars had been taught in the upper room of a house. Depression in trade in Saddleworth and district added considerably to the difficulties of the little band of workers, and led to the issuing of the following appeal for help:—

¹ These two men, locally called "John and Joseph," differed greatly in their gifts. John's sermons were interspersed with rough but vigorous sentences, of which the following is a sample: "God can strike a straight blow with a croot stick."

² MS account of Springhead Congregational Church, to which I am indebted for several particulars.

December 20th, 1827.

To all who love our Lord Jesus Christ and wish well to His cause, the poor members of the "Independent Evangelical Methodists' Church" at Uppermill, in Saddleworth, send greeting. As a Christian society we have experienced a long season of adversity. The debt of £270, which, notwithstanding the utmost exertion of our own ability to clear it, we were obliged to leave upon our meeting house, has latterly pressed heavily upon us. Our difficulties have been greatly increased by the disastrous events of the last two years, by which our pecuniary resources have in a great measure been dried up, and poverty has apparently settled on our parish. Our two ministers, who alternately supply us and our sister church at Spring Head, are obliged to serve us gratuitously; though, as they are poor and deserving men, we are sorry that they should have to labour without hire. But, alas! all the money that we can raise among ourselves is insufficient to pay the interest of the debt; consequently, while we have that heavy burden upon us, and the present unhappy state of things in our parish remains, we are hopeless of being able to do justice to our ministers, whom we are bound to love and reverence as being our spiritual fathers, by whose instrumentality we were called "out of darkness into light." In our distress we naturally look for relief to our more fortunate brethren in Christ. By the liberality of those of you whom God has prospered we wish, if possible, to pay off a third or a half of our debts, and thereby we trust being delivered from our present gloomy apprehensions. And may the Giver of all good reward a hundred-fold every *brother, sister, or friend* whose heart should pity us, and whose hands shall administer to our relief.

Signed on behalf of us all,

JOHN SCHOFIELD, JAMES BUCKLEY, THOMAS SHAW.

Whatever was the result of this appeal, it was not such as to permanently put off the evil day. Upper Mill Chapel was sold to the Congregationalists of Delph, and reopened as a Congregational place of worship; and about 1835 a similar change took place at Springhead. On Sunday, July 19th, 1835, the chapel was re-opened as a Congregational place of worship. The preachers on the occasion were: morning and afternoon, the Rev. John Cockin, of Holmfirth; evening, the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, of Ashton-under-Lyne; and on Monday evening, the Rev. John Thorp, of Huddersfield. The collections amounted to £41 6s. In the following November a church was formed by the Rev. Reuben Calvert, of Upper Mill, when twenty-nine persons agreed to enter into fellowship. The Rev. John Morris, a student from Blackburn Academy, became the first minister, entering upon duty as such in the midsummer of 1837. A few months previous to this Springhead had sought and

received assistance from the County Union Funds. During the first year of Mr. Morris's pastorate seventeen persons were added to the fellowship of the church, bringing the number of members up to fifty-two. The congregation is given as about 300; Lees, Waterhead Mill, and Austerlands were preaching stations at which services were held fortnightly; and in the Sunday School were 320 children and forty teachers. Stonebreaks, Den Lane, and Scouthead were subsequently added to the list of preaching places, and the County Union Report, ending April, 1840, states that at Lees a large schoolroom had been taken, capable of holding 250 people, where Mr. Morris purposed preaching on Sabbath day evenings. After about five years of useful service Mr. Morris removed to Morley, in Yorkshire, and has since become Dr. Morris, Principal of Brecon College, a position which he still worthily holds, though over eighty years of age. The Rev. R. Wolstenholme accepted the church's invitation in December, 1842. He was born at Nuttall Lane, near Bury, November 16th, 1813, educated at Blackburn Academy, being a fellow student with Dr. Morris, and settled at Carlisle in 1837, whence he removed to Springhead. The Report ending April, 1844, states that in addition to his work at Springhead, he preached at Mossley Bottoms, Scouthead, and Woodbrook, and that there was a "flourishing branch at Lees," having a Sunday School and preaching on Wednesday evenings. It was during his ministry in 1846 that the church dispensed with further assistance from the County Union. In the same year Mr. Wolstenholme removed to Belper, where he died September 6th, 1852. The Rev. J. R. Wolstenholme, M.A., who recently left Bolton¹ for Brisbane, is the son of the Springhead minister, being born there. No successor was appointed until May, 1850, when the Rev. Wm. Dixon, a student from Airedale College, became the pastor. During the interregnum the church had considerably declined, and the congregation was small when Mr. Dixon's ministry began. Prosperity, however, returned with him, and in 1855 the present chapel superseded the old building, which had done duty for half a century. The opening services took place on Good Friday, April 6th, 1855, when the Revs. Dr. Raffles and

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

H. Allon were the preachers. On the following Sunday sermons were preached by the Revs. J. Sutcliffe, J. G. Rogers, B.A., and J. Morris, a former pastor. The collections amounted to £170. The cost of the undertaking was £2,050, and towards this sum the people raised £700 among themselves, the Chapel Building Society granted another £700, and the "Christian public generously contributed, inclusive of the opening collections, £590," leaving only £60 as deficiency. The accommodation provided is for 750 persons. Impaired health led to Mr. Dixon's resignation in November, 1857, and he accepted the charge of the church at Boston Spa, removing thence to Gawthorpe, near Dewsbury. He died April 6th, 1867, aged fifty-one years. The Rev. J. G. Short was recognised as pastor, April 6th, 1860. He was a native of Ireland, was educated at the Dublin Institute under the Revs. Dr. Wm. Urwick and W. H. Cooper, and previous to his settlement at Springhead held pastorates at New Ross (Wexford), Plunket Street (Dublin), and Wrexham. It was during his ministry that the present school buildings were erected at a cost of £1,300, the foundation stone being laid May 24th, 1861, by Mr. A. Haworth, of Manchester. In 1862 Mr. Short returned to his native country, having accepted a charge at Belfast. He died July 27th, 1866, aged forty-two years. His successor at Springhead was the Rev. F. Smith, a student from New College, who began his labours in the year of Mr. Short's removal. He remained until 1868, when he removed to Liverpool, and is now resident, without charge, at Birkdale.¹ The Rev. A. Phillips, a student from Airedale College, followed in 1868, and removed to Wicker Chapel, Sheffield, in 1878. He is now the minister of the Hillhouse Congregational Church, Huddersfield. The present pastor is the Rev. J. S. Waide, educated at Lancashire College, and who had previously laboured at Bollington, near Macclesfield. Mr. Waide began his Springhead ministry in 1878; he has therefore faithfully served the church for fifteen years, being a considerably longer pastorate than that of any predecessor.

¹ Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

VIII.—CONGREGATIONALISM AT MIDDLETON.

THE town of Middleton, some five miles north of Manchester, three south of Heywood, and three west of Oldham, is rich in objects of historic interest. Middleton Hall, demolished in 1845, was for many generations the residence of the Assheton family, which has played an important part in English history, Sir Richard Assheton being one of the heroes of Flodden Field, and Colonel Assheton being the Commander-in-Chief of the Lancashire forces under the Commonwealth, whose "Middleton clubmen" took part in the defence of Manchester, and fought the Royalist army at Bolton in 1643. Its Parish Church is very ancient and picturesque. The windows have been enriched with some fine stained glass from Middleton Hall, one of which represents "a chaplain and seventeen warriors with bows and quivers of arrows."¹ In the cemetery there is a statue of Samuel Bamford, the Radical, one of the heroes of Peterloo, and the leader of a vigorous local band of aggressive reformers. Middleton Church did not add to the list of ministers who went out for conscience' sake in 1662. It has, therefore, no Nonconformist foundation reaching back to those times, and Congregationalism here is not a century old. Middleton is first mentioned in the County Union Reports in 1823, when it is said that principally preachers from Manchester supplied; that the Sunday morning congregation was about 100, afternoon 150; on week-day evenings, when stated ministers preached, the assembly was equally numerous; there were 120 children in the Sunday School; and that on "Monday and Saturday evenings the elder scholars were taught writing and accounts, and the girls were taught to sew." In 1823 a church was formed, and the following year Middleton and Heywood were united under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Crossley. In 1825 Mr. Crossley removed to Horwich,² and a separation between the two stations took place, the population being such as to require "two preachers." In the summer of

¹ Rimmer's "Summer Rambles Around Manchester," p. 64.

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

1828 the congregation removed from the room in which they had previously worshipped to a chapel formerly occupied by the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion; but for a time little progress was made—indeed, both church and congregation seemed to be “on the decline.” The Rev. John Hart became the minister towards the end of 1832, but he remained only about twelve months. A chapel was erected in 1836, and in July, 1839, the Rev. William Atherton became the minister. He removed to Bingley at the Christmas of the following year, and subsequently to Idle, where he laboured until his death, which occurred July 16th, 1850, at the age of thirty-four years. The Rev. Edward Leighton, educated at Nottingham, and previously settled at Loughborough, succeeded Mr. Atherton in 1843, and the report concerning the church about this time reads thus:—

Though the progress of the cause here in past years has not been equal to the hopes of sanguine friends, yet its importance, placed in the midst of a dense population, has been apparent to all. The hope is now confidently indulged that the crisis of weakness and deficiency is in great measure passed, and that a more cheering prospect of prosperity and usefulness is opening up to view; such at least is the feeling of the members of the church there.¹

In the midsummer of 1845 Mr. Leighton removed to Moor Green, Nottinghamshire. He died November 23rd, 1874, aged seventy-three years, and was succeeded at Middleton by the Rev. Thomas Hamer in 1848. He was educated at Rotherham College, and had previously laboured a few years at Barnard Castle. Mr. Hamer left Middleton in 1851 for Auckland, New Zealand, where he laboured for many years, and where he still resides without charge. The Report for the year ending April, 1851, says that a great effort had been made to “enlarge the school accommodation and to improve the chapel, and £460 had been expended for that purpose;” that “a day school had been opened in the course of the year in the new schoolroom, to which Mr. Peto, M.P., had sent a handsome contribution.” The Rev. W. Winlaw, educated at Blackburn Academy, and previously at Wellington, in Somerset, became Mr. Hamer's successor in 1852. He resigned

¹ County Union Report for year ending April, 1844.

after about twelve months' ministry, and entered the Established Church. In 1853 the Rev. A. Bateson, from Egerton, became the pastor, and with his advent the church ceased to be dependent upon the County Union Funds. Mr. Bateson's ministry was terminated by his death, September 30th, 1854.¹ His successor was the Rev. Samuel Shaw. Born on January 31st, 1821, "in a small village in the parish of Saddleworth," he attended the Springhead Congregational Church during the pastorate of the Rev. John Morris, by whom he was advised to enter the ministry. "After pursuing certain preparatory studies under the direction of Mr. Morris," he went to Blackburn Academy, and was transferred to Lancashire College on its removal to Manchester. His first settlement was Ovenden, near Halifax, whence he removed in August, 1855, to Middleton. In April, 1859, James Sidebottom, Esq. laid the foundation stone of the present chapel, which contains sitting accommodation for 900 persons. The total cost of the undertaking was about £2,530, towards which the Chapel Building Society granted £250. The building was opened for public worship on June 13th, 1860, and the Congregational Year Book for 1861 says:—

The Old Chapel has been altered and appropriated to the uses of the Sunday Schools, week evening services, and lectures, and the former school-rooms, which are under the same roof, divided into various classrooms for infants and elder scholars."²

In the month of November, 1866, Mr. Shaw removed to Clevedon, in Somerset. He died at Penzance, February 28th, 1874. The Rev. T. Stimpson held the pastorate from 1868 to 1871, becoming subsequently the minister of Chapel Street Chapel, Salford.³ The next minister was the Rev. J. S. Hill, from Exeter. He had charge of the church from 1872 to 1877, when he entered the Established Church. The Rev. J. Colclough, educated at Nottingham Institute, and whose previous charge was Moy, in Ireland, succeeded Mr. Hill in 1879. He remained until 1886, when he resigned and went to Canada, where he still labours.

¹ Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Page 268.

³ Vide ante p. 216.

During Mr. Colclough's pastorate in 1880, new schools were erected, costing £2,500. The present respected pastor is the Rev. W. H. Fothergill, formerly of Barrow-in-Furness, and Heywood.¹ He succeeded Mr. Colclough in 1887. The church moves steadily ahead; the Sunday School contains over 400 scholars, and the Day School, which was re-opened two years ago, has about 200 pupils under tuition and Government inspection.

Salem Church originated in a dispute amongst the people of Providence Chapel, respecting their minister, the Rev. Samuel Shaw. Some forty or fifty of his friends, thinking he had not been justly treated, without any concerted action, resolved to withdraw. For several Sundays they worshipped at the various Nonconformist places of worship in the town. Some of them having been teachers at a branch school in Tonge Lane, and this school in its entirety having resolved upon severing its connection with Providence Chapel, fearing that the majority of the children might be lost to all Christian influences, they determined, if possible, to keep them together. They, therefore, rented Salem Chapel, which had been built by a number of secessionists from the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, and which was then unoccupied. The chapel was opened first as a Sunday School, some sixty or seventy children assembling the first Sunday, and shortly after preaching services were commenced. Its formal opening in this connection took place on October 21st, 1866, when the Rev. Samuel Shaw conducted the services. A church, consisting of forty-four members, was formed on January 6th, 1867, the Rev. John Hodgson, of Oldham, being present for the purpose. The pulpit was supplied largely by students and laymen until the beginning of 1869, when the Rev. S. Firth was invited to assume the pastorate. The invitation was not then accepted, but it was so on its being renewed in 1870, and Mr. Firth began his labours as the first minister on the first Sunday in February of that year. He completed a useful ministry in September, 1886, his resignation being necessitated by failing health, and is now pastor of the Congregational Church at Churchtown, near Southport.² His

¹ Vide vols. i. and iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

successor was the Rev. John Fielden from Plymouth, who held the pastorate from May, 1888, to September, 1890. It was during his ministry that Salem Congregational Schools were erected with accommodation for 560 scholars, and costing about £1,200. The memorial stones were laid on Saturday, June 8th, 1889, by Mr. R. Hankinson, J.P., and others, and the building was completed and opened in October of the same year, when amongst the preachers were the Revs. T. Green, M.A., of Ashton-under-Lyne, and Dr. Macfadyen. Mr. Fielden, after leaving Middleton, settled at Tyldesley, where he still labours. No successor has yet been appointed, students from Lancashire College supplying the pulpit. There are about 260 scholars in regular attendance, and 122 names on the roll of church members.

CHAPTER V.

NONCONFORMITY IN ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

I.—EARLY NONCONFORMITY.

NONCONFORMITY in this neighbourhood first appears in Dukinfield, then a mere village, now a considerable town. As a matter of geography its history belongs rather to Cheshire than Lancashire, because Dukinfield is on the Cheshire side of the river Tame, which a little above Stockport becomes the Mersey. Nonconformity here, however, is so closely associated with that of Ashton-under-Lyne immediately across the river, whilst its two Congregational churches have so long been connected with the Lancashire Congregational Union, that geographical limitations must be set aside.¹ It is claimed, and not without some reason, that Dukinfield became the home of one of the earliest Congregational churches in England. Edwards, who was the opponent of Congregationalism, says :—

Considering this church of Dukinfield is the first Independent Church visible and framed that was set up in England, being before the Apologists came from Holland, and so before their setting up churches here in London.²

¹ Dr. Aikin ("Forty Miles Round Manchester," p. 451), writing in 1795, says : "The village is pleasantly situated upon an eminence commanding an extensive prospect over a populous, varied, and picturesque country. Its name in the Anglo-Saxon dialect was *Dokenveldt*. The river Tame separates it from the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, in Lancashire, on the north and west sides. This river, in the time of the heptarchy, was the boundary of two kingdoms, which will account for the strong outworks of the castle or old hall of Ashton, opposed by equally strong fortifications on this side. These were situated somewhere on the grounds now occupied by the lodge; and the mansion, formerly the seat of the Dukinfield family, thus defended, stood on a place called the Hall-green. No trace of it remains but the name. The hall now bearing the family name was erected in its stead."

² Urwick's "Nonconformity in Cheshire," p. 341.

If, however, such a high antiquity cannot be upheld, it is certain that a Congregational church existed here during the early years of the Commonwealth. The place of meeting was "a small Gothic chapel, originally the private oratory and domestic chapel of the Dukinfield family," adjoining the Old Hall; and the first known preacher was the Rev. Samuel Eaton. Dr. Halley has the following interesting passage:—

Amidst the ruined walls of the old family chapel is the tomb of a Duckenfield who gained his honours in the wars of the crusaders. That dilapidated tomb of the crusader, and the ivy-covered walls of the venerable chapel are the oldest architectural memorials which can be identified of English Congregationalism. In that chapel, encouraged by Colonel Robert Duckenfield,¹ a distinguished officer of Cromwell's army, the Rev. Samuel Eaton gathered the first Congregational Church in the north of England, and often preached standing, as the traditions of the place say, on the crusader's tomb.²

The Rev. Samuel Eaton mentioned in the foregoing extract was the son of the Rev. Richard Eaton, Vicar of Great Budworth.³ He was born in 1597, educated at Oxford, and beneficed for a time as rector of West Kirby, in Cheshire, where, about 1634, he was

¹ The Dukinfield family, to whom Nonconformity in this district owes so much, deserve a much more lengthy notice than is possible here. Colonel Robert Dukinfield is described as "a Congregationalist and a zealous republican." He was born August 18, 1619, and was "nominated one of the high court for the trial of King Charles, but, being that year Sheriff of Cheshire, he did not occupy the place assigned to him, and so escaped the peril of the regicides." (Halley's "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. i., p. 294.) In May, 1644, in conjunction with Colonel Mainwaring, he kept, with a few forces, Stockport Bridge against Prince Rupert. On the restoration of the Stuarts, he suffered imprisonment, but he "lived to rejoice in the accession of King William, died the year after the Revolution, and was buried, where many good Puritans of the old times lie around him, in the chapel of Denton." (Halley's "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity"—Ibid.) His death took place September 18th, 1689.

² "Lancashire Puritanism and Nonconformity," vol. i., p. 294.

³ So says Calamy ("Nonconformist's Memorial," vol. ii., p. 361); but the Rev. R. T. Herford, B.A. ("Memorials of Stand Chapel," p. 20), who has obtained his information from a representative of the family, says that Samuel Eaton was the son of George Eaton "the friend and correspondent of John Bradford, the martyr," and grandson of Richard Eaton, of Great Budworth. Mr. Herford does not say whether Richard Eaton was Vicar of Great Budworth.

fined "in sums mounting to from £50 to £500" for his "contumacy," and eventually suspended by the Bishop of Chester. Like his brother, therefore, Theophilus Eaton, who became the eminent governor of New Haven, he sought an asylum in New England from the storms of persecution which were gathering round the Nonconformists in the Mother Country. After a few years, however, he returned, and in 1645 he is mentioned as colleague with the Rev. Timothy Taylor in the pastorate of the Dukinfield Congregational Church.¹ In addition to his duties at Dukinfield he held the post of chaplain to the forces at Chester, which necessitated his residence in that city. Mr. Eaton's frequent absences from his church led to divisions fostered by "gifted persons," and he "removed to Stockport, where he preached in the free school." It is not clear whether afterwards he returned to Dukinfield. Calamy says:—

After he was ejected in 1662 he attended on the ministry of Mr. Angier at Denton, as did many of his old hearers, who, by afflictions and sufferings, were wrought into a better temper. Mr. Eaton died January 9th, 1664, aged 68. He left no children, but left a good name among persons of all persuasions.²

Henry Newcome tells us that he was buried at Denton Chapel. Writing under date January 11th, 1666 (Thursday), he says:—

We buried poor Mr. Leigh, of Gorton, at Denton Chapel, by the day of the week the same day twelve months that we had before buried Mr. Eaton, in the same place.³

¹ The Rev. Timothy Taylor, B.A., was the son of the Rev. Thomas Taylor, Vicar of Hemel Hemstead, Hertfordshire. He was baptised in 1613, entered Queen's College, Oxford, in 1626, took holy orders in 1634, and became vicar of Almesley, in Herefordshire. Seeing the "evils of Episcopacy and ceremonies imposed," he repented, and publicly preached against them. After serving the Congregationalists of Dukinfield for several years he removed to Ireland in 1650, becoming minister of Carrickfergus, "then resorted to by Presbyterians and Independents." In 1688 he was living at Dublin, where he became the colleague of the Rev. Samuel Mather, remaining there until his death. (Vide Urwick's "Nonconformity in Cheshire," p. 343; also his "Nonconformity in Herts," p. 428.)

² "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 361.

³ "Autobiography," p. 155 (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxvii.). Mr. W. A. Shaw, however, in his "Manchester Classis" (Chetham Society, New Series, vol. xxiv., p. 426), gives the following from the Stockport Registers: "1664, January 12th, Saml. Eaton, of Bredburie, minister, buried."

Mr. Eaton was called the "great apostle," for promoting Independency in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Cheshire, and was the author of several important pamphlets in its support. His book, the "Quakers Confuted," is described as "Christian and temperate," whilst that of his opponents abounds in abuse and coarseness.¹

With the Restoration, in 1660, the fortunes of the Dukinfield family changed. Colonel Dukinfield was summoned before the House of Commons because of the part he had taken in the Civil War; the chapel at the Hall was confiscated, and the Episcopalians appropriated to their own use "both it and an adjoining Nonconformist seminary."²

The township of Denton, in whose chapel Calamy says Samuel Eaton and his friends worshipped after the ejection, enjoying the ministry of the Rev. John Angier, is a few miles south-west of Dukinfield. He was born at Dedham, in Essex, October 8th, 1605, and connected by marriage with Dr. John Cotton, of Boston, in Lincolnshire, subsequently of New England fame, in 1629 John Angier, like many of the Puritans of that time, began to think of going to America, and actually journeyed into Lancashire, to the home of his wife's relations, with that in view. This led to his settlement at Ringley, near Bolton, whence, owing to his Nonconformity, he was obliged to remove, in 1632, when he became the minister of Denton Chapel. Supported by the Holland and Hyde families he was able to continue his ministrations at Denton during all those years of persecution which brought to so many Nonconformists ejection, imprisonment, and exile. "In Mr. Angier's days," says Booker, "Denton was the favourite resort of the Nonconforming and ejected ministers," their "little Goshen in life," with whose "peaceful associations" many of them sought a continuance in

¹ The following is a specimen :—"O Eaton, thou liar ! O thou liar ! Doth Satan transform himself into ministers of righteousness ? Here I charge thee, in the presence of Christ, to be a liar. O, thou dark sot." It is much to be regretted that the history of George Fox and his early followers is marked by such bitter and un-Christian abuse of all who were not of their way of thinking.

² "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne" (published in 1867), p. 3.

the "slumbers of the tomb." Until his death, September 1st, 1677, Mr. Angier served the congregation at Denton, "refusing all offers of more substantial preferment." "He died," says his biographer, "amongst his own people, over whom he had been pastor forty-five years, with whom he had been travelling, weeping, fasting, praying; amongst whom he has left remarkable seals of his ministry." He was interred in the chapel facing the pulpit, near the body of his second wife, the daughter of Oswald Mosley, Esq., of Ancoats. He was the ancestor of an eminent race of Dissenting ministers.² An effort was made to secure as his successor his nephew, the Rev. Samuel Angier, who had assisted him in the pastorate several years before his death, but though he was able to command "a powerful interest" the effort did not succeed, and Mr. Samuel Angier retired to the "adjacent village of Dukinfield."³ The Conformist minister, the Rev. John Ogden, B.A., was appointed, and Denton Chapel has ever since been served by Episcopalians. "The building," says Baines, "is still the same as when first built three centuries ago, being the only one of the more ancient chapels in the parish [of Manchester], retaining those original architectural fixtures which probably all once had in common."⁴

The accompanying view of Denton Chapel is as it appeared at the close of last century. In the foreground is the old Yew Tree, in a very decayed condition, respecting which the Rev. W. P. Greswell, Incumbent of the chapel from 1791 to 1853, composed the following stanzas:—

While silent ages glide away,
And turrets tremble with decay,
Let not the pensive Muse disdain
The tribute of one humble strain
To mourn in plaints of pity due
The fate of yonder blasted yew.

¹ "History of the Ancient Chapel of Denton," p. 114 (Chetham Society Series, vol. xxxvii.).

² Vide vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity" for a full account of the Angier family.

³ Vide p. 287.

⁴ "History of Lancashire" (Croston's Edition), vol. ii., p. 241.

Long blotted from the rolls of time
 The day that mark'd thy early prime,
 No hoary sage remains to say,
 Who kindly rear'd thy tender spray ;
 Who taught its slow maturing form
 From age to age to brave the storm.

Beneath thy widely branching shade
 Perchance his weary limbs were laid ;
 Content, without a stone, to share
 The umbrage of thy grateful care ;
 His utmost wish for thee to shed
 Oblivion's dews around thy head.

And long thy darkling foliage gave
 A hallowed stillness to his grave ;
 For there, if legends rightly tell,
 No vagrant reptile dared to dwell :
 E'en sprites, by moonlight wont to stray,
 Scar'd at thy presence, fled away.

As thus, in contemplative mood,
 The venerable trunk I view'd,
 Forth issuing from the sapless rind
 A hoarse voice trembled on the wind.
 Amaz'd I stood, and wing'd with fear,
 These accents caught my wondering ear—

“ Me, to the precincts of the place
 That antique hallowed Pile to grace,
 From native woods, in days of yore,
 The fathers of the hamlet bore.—
 Foster'd by Superstition's hand,
 A late memorial now I stand.

“ My spreading shade, extending wide,
 The village wonder—and its pride—
 I mark'd, as years revolved, the blow
 That laid each hardiest grandsire low—
 Now worn with all consuming age,
 I yield to Time's relentless rage.

“ Nor fondly blame, with strain severe,
 The simple zeal that placed me here.
 Nor dare thy fathers to despise,
 And deem thy upstart sons more wise.
 Let self conviction check thy pride,
 To error both too near allied.

“ Of Zeal’s unletter’d warmth possess,
 Yet still Religion fir’d their breast ;
 Frequent the hallowed court to tread
 Where Mercy hears Repentance plead,
 Constant the grateful hymn to raise ;
 Our Zion echoed with their praise.

“ Their sons superior knowledge boast ;
 Knowledge how vain ! since Zcal is lost.
 Now, gradual as my branches pine,
 I see Devotion’s flame decline,
 And while, like me, Religion wanes,
 Alas ! her vestige scarce remains.”¹



DENTON OLD CHAPEL IN 1793.

¹ In the Denton Chapel Parish Register, under date February 1, 1714-15, Tuesday, is the following : “ Abt noon there happened a violent and terrible storm of wind, w^{ch} shatter’d and blew down y^e highest and greatest part of y^e Yew Tree in y^e Chap^l yard, w^{ch} before was suppos’d to be one of y^e noblest and largest in y^e Kingdom, being a very great ornament as well as shelter to y^e Chappell.” Booker (“History of Denton Chapel,” p. 119, note, being vol. xxxvii. of the Chetham Society’s Old Series) says : “ The yew tree at Denton occupied a position at the south side of the chapel. It never recovered from the effects of this memorable storm, and was eventually cut down in the year 1800, and superseded in the following year by a small tree of the same species.”

The story of early Nonconformity in this district may be completed by a few sentences respecting the Rev. John Harrison, "an orthodox, painfull, able minister," ejected from the Parish Church of Ashton-under-Lyne, in 1662. He had held the cure from 1643, had previously been the minister of Walmsley Chapel, near Bolton, and was an intimate friend of the family of Oliver Heywood. After his ejection he removed to Salford, "where he was soon afterwards deprived of the use of his limbs, which was thought to be the consequence of his indefatigable labours, fastings, and night studies."¹ He died at Ashton "on the last day of December [1670], about foure clocke afternoon," and was buried in the chancel of the church, his successor, the Rev. Thomas Ellison, preaching his funeral sermon, and giving him a great character, but not beyond his desert."² No Nonconformist interest in Ashton-under-Lyne is traceable to the labours of Mr. Harrison, at Denton, or to those of Mr. Angier, doubtless because the one at Dukinfield, only a few miles away, was found to be sufficient for the needs of the whole neighbourhood.

II.—DUKINFIELD OLD CHAPEL.

IN the previous section it is stated that the Rev. Samuel Angier, on being prevented from succeeding his uncle in the pastorate of Denton Chapel, retired to the "adjacent village of Dukinfield." The times were heavy against Nonconformists, and Mr. Angier's opportunities for serving those of his former charge who were of his way of thinking would be limited. The following picture is worth preservation :—

Tradition can yet point out the place in a neighbouring wood, where on days set apart, under the watch of sentinels, and at nightfall, when they were less likely to be observed, the proscribed ministers were met by their faithful adherents, when the pious service of prayer, praise, and exhortation had no other walls to surround it but the naked thicket, and no other roof for its protection but the canopy of heaven.³

¹ Calamy's "Nonconformist's Memorial" (1802), vol. ii., p. 352.

² *Ibid*; vide also vol. iii., of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ "Monthly Repository" for 1823, p. 682.

At Stockport, in 1680, it is said he was excommunicated, after which time he preached as opportunity permitted in a barn in Henshaw Lane, between Newton and Dukinfield. The Toleration Act of 1689 brought relief, and Mr. Angier lost no time in licensing "his out-housing,"¹ and there he resumed his long-interrupted ministerial functions." The hayloft was fitted up as a temporary gallery, and the family of the "Hall were not ashamed, surrounded by their tenantry, to attend upon his ministry."² Here worship was held until 1708, when by the munificence of Sir Robert Dukinfield and "other and humbler well wishers to the cause a commodious chapel was erected."³ The following passage from an address by the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., at the stone laying of the new chapel in June, 1839, is interesting:—

The chapel was completed in the summer of 1708, and was first used for public worship on a thanksgiving day for the victory of Oudenarde. The Dissenters of that day would naturally feel that the continuance of their religious privileges somewhat depended on the continued success of the British arms, the war having broken out between this country and France in consequence of the latter having recognised the title of the Stuart family to the throne of England. The "Old Chapel" was not, however, opened for regular public worship until the 20th of August.⁴

Over the southern entrance of the chapel, which stood upon "a most beautiful and commanding eminence," was the date 1707.⁵

Close by and about the same time a school was erected, which was taken down over a century ago "to give the former building all the advantage of its peculiarly fine situation." A writer of

¹ He lived on a small estate in Dukinfield, till lately known as "Angier's Tenement."

² "Monthly Repository" for 1823, p. 682.

³ "Christian Reformer" for 1839, p. 668.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 669.

⁵ Dr. Aikin, writing in 1795, says:—"On the summit above Dukinfield-lodge stands a very ancient dissenters' chapel, built of stone, and surrounded with a burying ground planted with firs. It has a large congregation, noted for fine singers, and was long under the care of the Rev. Mr. Buckley. Here lie buried some of the Dukinfield family. The chapel itself is a fine station for an extensive prospect, and is itself a striking object from the vicinity."—"Forty Miles around Manchester," p. 453).

seventy years ago gives the following information respecting this institution :—

This school is said to have flourished very much, particularly under the mastership of *Domini* Gee, specimens of whose superior penmanship in the Italian court hand of that period are yet in preservation. It is not unworthy of remark that the widow of *Domini* Gee's son is yet a resident in the village, and possesses comparatively strong mental and corporeal energy, now in her 101st year. Not long ago, she was invited to the house of one of her descendants, when a meeting took place at a tea party of five generations in the same family. One of her grandsons is now the stone-cutter and officiating sexton belonging to the chapel yard. Previous to this school, a seminary for the education of young gentlemen had been conducted with great reputation in this place by a Mr. Barlow, whose classic attainments were held in very great esteem. Indeed, such was his widely extended reputation, that several London merchants, as well as the neighbouring gentlemen, sent their sons to be educated by him. Amongst his pupils from London, a son of the celebrated critic, John Dennis, was of the number. This boy is reported to have been a great oddity, whose peculiarities contributed in no small degree to the mirth of his associates.¹

Mr. Angier continued to serve the congregation until his death, November 8th, 1713, and, as he holds so prominent a place in the history of Nonconformity here, the reader will welcome a few more particulars about him. He was the son of Bezaleel Angier, of Dedham, in Essex, where he was born August 28th, 1639. His early education he received at Westminster School, under the celebrated Dr. Busby, whence he removed to Christ Church, Oxford. The Uniformity Act of 1662 led to his ejection from the University, after which he lived for several years with Dr. Owen, "for whom he always retain'd a most profound Respect." His ordination took place on October 29th, 1672, at the house of the Rev. Robert Eaton, in Deansgate, Manchester,² he being at the time his uncle's assistant at Denton. Like his uncle,

¹ "Monthly Repository" for 1823, p. 681.

² Hunter says this was the "first Presbyterian ordination among the Nonconformists in the north of England, and perhaps the first in any part of the kingdom." ("Life of Oliver Heywood," p. 244). In addition to Mr. Angier, Mr. Joseph Dawson, a neighbour and friend of Oliver Heywood, and Mr. John Jollie, brother of the Rev. Thomas Jollie, of Altham, were candidates, the ordainers being the Revs. Oliver Heywood, John Angier, Henry Newcome, Henry Finch, and Robert Eaton.

he married into the Mosley family, his wife being Ann, daughter of Oswald Mosley, Esq. She died in 1690, and was interred in the graveyard of the Collegiate Church, Manchester. In the "Northowram Register" is the following reference to the event:—

"Mr. Saml. Angier's wife, of Dukinfield, died of a Tympany, buried at Manchester, July 26. Mr. ffr. Mosley, her uncle, preacht ffuneral."¹

For many years previous to his death Mr. Angier was almost blind, but he "frequently entertained himself with repeating the greatest part of David's Psalms and Paul's Epistles." His remains were laid in the graveyard of the chapel which was built for him, and upon his tombstone the following Latin inscription was placed :

Hic requiescit in Domino
 SAMUEL ANGIER,
 Jesu Christi Minister,
 Vir primaevae Pietatis et omni virtute praeclarus,
 Dedhamiae in Comitatu Essexiae
 Piis et honestis Parentibus,
 Natus Octobris 28, 1639.
 Westmonasteriensis Scholae deinde Ædis Christi Oxon,
 Alumnus Regius,
 Concionator Egregius et Assiduus,
 Continuis Evangelii Laboribus et Morbis,
 Fere Obrutus,
 Lumine etiam, ingravescente Ætate, orbatus
 Tandem Animam placide,
 Deo reddidit,
 8vo Novembris Anno Salutis
 MDCCXIII,
 Ætatis Lxxv.
 In perpetuam Pietatis Memoriam,
 Bezaleel et Johannis Filii Sui,
 H. M. P. C.

Calamy says that all his days he was "a close student, a great valuer of Bible knowledge, an exact preacher, and one that liv'd as he spoke, and spoke as he liv'd."² An interesting little diary kept

¹ Page 78.

² "Account of the Ejected and Silenced Ministers," vol. iii., p. 111 (Edition 1727).

by him is still in existence, from which the following local and family items have been extracted:—

My Bror. John Angier came to his father's house from Verginia, Tuesday, July 26th, 1664.

Janet, d. of Tho: Hooly, of Duc [kinfield], baptis'd Aprill 22, 1603. Mary baptised Jan. 6, 1606.

Martha, June 29th, 1609. The sisters were all born at the house in Duckenfield wherin I dwell.

January 24th, 1682, my wife and self fall dangerously of a horse by Law: Wright's, but wh. little damage, "blessed be the Lord."

February 4th, 1682.—Dyed landlord, Benjamin Walker, bur. 7th, sad all over. His widow dyed June 17th following.

7th.—I went to Mr. Hirst's, being sent for w'th Sr Robt. [Duckinfield].

13th.—Bro. Nat's 2d Son was born: ye 13 named Matthew.

15th.—It's this day 15 yeares since I came to Denton.

17th.—This day it's fifteen yeares since I first preached y're.

21st.—My dear and precious mother departed this life ye 21st about ten before noon. 12 Febr. last year dyed Bror. Matthew Angier: this is the third death since October 29, 1678—my dear father, bro'r, and mother,

March 2, 1682.—Son Bezaleel went to Manchester.

June 4th.—At night, about 12, Bro'r Bezaleel taken ill w'h a palsye on one side, and became very weak.

15th.—Bro'r Bezaleel departed this life.

16th.—Frydaie night, about 12 o'clock, Mr. Jo. Jolly departed this life, to ye great losse of the Church of God. [This was the Rev. John Jollie, who was ejected from Norbury, in Cheshire, in 1662, and was brother to the Rev. Thomas Jollie, of Wymond-houses, near Clitheroe, who says that he died in one night's sickness.]

17th.—Dyed my Landlady, Walker, of Asheton; bur. 20th.

25th.—Dyed Cousin Anne Langton, of Preston, at Kersall, buried at Manchester, tuesday, 27.

1682.—Cousin John Angier was w'h us about 14 days, and 3 weeks in May and June.

Sept. 2.—Sister Mary Barker delivered of a daughter.

24th.—Cousin John Angier came to my house.

October 12th.—Sam. Eaton married. [Minister of the Nonconformist Chapel at Stand. Oliver Heywood, in his diary, says that Mr. Eaton was married Sept. 22, and so there is a discrepancy.]

16th.—I went to Manch. w'h my wife and stayed 3 nights at Mr.———.

21.—Cousin Sam. Angier came to my house.

26 of Nov.—Cousin Sam. went from my house.

Nov. 7th.—I went to Manch. and stayed 2 nights at O. Butterworth's.

25th.—Dyed Martha, Bro. Matth's wid.

29th of Nov., 1670.—Mr. Charles Duckinfield was baptised, soe that he is now twelve yeares old.

Like many other Nonconformist ministers of the time, Mr. Angier appears to have been a small farmer as well as a pastor, and his diary contains entries to the effect that his field was "plowed and harrowed in a good time;" that his "old horse dyed;" and that he brewed his own beer about every month, when "2 hoops were used."¹

The Rev. Wm. Buckley succeeded Mr. Angier in 1714, in which year he was ordained at Knutsford. His biographer says:—

He happened to possess a patrimonial estate in the township, and when young became enamoured of a daughter of the Baronet whose demesne land lay contiguous to his own. The parties were prevented ratifying that union so much coveted by both, and the lady died soon after (in lover's language) of a broken heart. He afterwards married a half-sister of the Baronet's, a daughter of Colonel Dukinfield in his old age, by a third wife, whose maiden name was Bottomley.²

Mr. Buckley's ministrations at Dukinfield terminated only with his death in 1752. In a paper written by him he gives the following particulars respecting his congregation, which show how large and influential it was:—

Baronet	1
Esquire	1
Gentlemen	12
Tradesmen	16
Yeomen.....	76
Late comers, labourers, servants, &c.....	687
	<hr/>
	793
	<hr/>
Votes for knights of the county	96

As illustrative of his influence over the people in the village it is said that "if he shook his stick at the Hall Green (the place of

¹ This interesting little volume, formerly in the possession of the Rev. Richard Slate, at Preston, is now the property of Mr. John Hargreaves, of Rock Ferry. It was given to Mr. Slate by the late Mr. Edward Harrison, of Preston, a descendant of Mr. Angier. (Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity.")

² "Monthly Repository" for 1823, p. 682.

his residence) the boys trembled as far as the town lane end (distant half a mile)." During the few years immediately succeeding Mr. Buckley's death "a lamentable series of congregational divisions occur, and a manifest want of suitability in the ministers that were chosen to succeed him." The following five names of persons who held the pastorate for a few months each are mentioned, concerning whom little is known:—Revs. J. Burgess,¹ S. Stopford,² R. Robinson,³ Gladstone,⁴ and J. Helme.⁵

"Conformably to the wishes of the congregation," it is said that the last named person was induced to resign in favour of the Rev. William Buckley, the only son of their former so much esteemed pastor. Mr. Buckley quitted trade and "at a mature age devoted himself to an academical education for the purpose of healing the divisions of the congregation as their minister." Such is the record; but another writer states that the troubles which came upon the church in years subsequent to the ministry of Mr. Buckley, senior, came through the son, "who, although he bore the father's name, did not inherit his father's intellect and connections."⁶ Educated by Dr. Caleb Ashworth in the Daventry Academy, of which he became a student in 1756, he appears to have settled for a short time at Atherstone, in Warwickshire,⁷ whence he removed to Dukinfield in 1762. It is recorded that he came to Dukinfield "not only an Arian, but also a clerical dandy," and that an attempt was made to eject him from the

¹ Probably the Rev. James Burgess, of Greenacres Chapel, Oldham. Vide ante p. 236; also vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² The congregation is said to have been divided between Mr. Burgess and Mr. Stopford.

³ Subsequently at Dob Lane, in the history of which a full account of this singular man is given (vide ante p. 44).

⁴ A Scotchman whose immoral conduct "soon drove him away" from Dukinfield. Possibly the person of that name mentioned in the history of Greenacres Chapel (vide ante p. 238).

⁵ It is recorded that he came to Dukinfield from St. Helens. I have not met with his name in the Nonconformity of that district. The Rev. J. Helme appears at Blackley, Walmsley, etc. (vide ante p. 34; also vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity.")

⁶ "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne," p. 7.

⁷ "Monthly Repository" for 1822, p. 164.

pulpit, which failed. "A conspicuous opponent of his views," says one, "was an Ashtonian of the name of Walker," who, "on one occasion, when the clerical coxcomb was about to ascend the pulpit in the full flown ecclesiastical millinery of the period, confronted him in the passage, and, pointing with his walking stick to the minister's dress, exclaimed aloud, 'Where silk gowns and powdered wigs come, there cometh no gospel.'" A secession of those who were dissatisfied with Mr. Buckley's ministry eventually took place, with which is associated the origin of Congregationalism in Dukinfield and Ashton-under-Lyne. Infirmities led to his resignation in 1791, in which year he was succeeded by the Rev. David Davies, a student from Carmarthen. "Unfortunately," says his biographer, "habits of inebriety, early imbibed, blasted the promise of much utility. He became unfitted for his situation, and, quitting the country, it is said he died abroad." Mr. Davies resigned in 1794, and is called the first "Unitarian" minister of the chapel. The Rev. Thomas Smith followed from 1794 to 1796, and his other pastorates were at Stand, Risley, and Park Lane.¹ A brief ministry, extending only over a few months, by the Rev. William Tate, subsequently of Chorley,² was succeeded by that of the Rev. James Hawkes. Born at Buckingham in September, 1771, educated at the Northampton Academy under the Rev. John Horsey, and minister at Congleton in 1797, he removed to Dukinfield in 1800. He established a Sunday School, "the first institution of the kind in the village." In 1813 he removed to Lincoln, and subsequently to Nantwich, where he died May 19th, 1846. The Rev. Joseph Ashton, for some time minister at Dob Lane and then Preston,³ was here from 1814 to 1817. In 1819 the Rev. John Gaskell, M.A., became the minister. He belonged to the family of that name at Warrington, was educated at Glasgow University, and settled first for a short time at Thorne, in Yorkshire, whence he removed to Dukinfield. Death carried him away in the midst of his labours at the early age of forty-one years, on May 15th, 1836. His

¹ Vide vols. iii, and iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity." Mr. Smith was the author of an Essay on "Avarice," and two volumes of poetry.

² Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

³ Vide ante p. 48; and vol. i. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

successor was the Rev. R. B. Aspland, M.A. He was educated at Glasgow University, and Manchester New College, York; was minister at Chester from 1826 to 1832; one of the ministers at Lewin's Mead, Bristol, from 1833 to 1837; removing in the latter year to Dukinfield. It was during his ministry that the old chapel, which had become quite dilapidated^r and unequal to the wants of the congregation, was superseded by the present handsome structure, which contains about 1,000 sittings, and cost £5,000. The foundation stone was laid by Samuel Ashton, Esq., on June 26th, 1839, on which occasion Mr. Aspland delivered an interesting address upon early Nonconformity in the district. On Wednesday, August 26th, of the following year, the opening sermon, from Mark xi., 17, was preached by the Rev. Robert Aspland, of Hackney; the other ministers assisting being the Revs. J. E. Robberds, of Manchester, and James Hawkes, a former pastor. Mr. Aspland continued his labours until 1858, when he removed to Hackney. He died in 1869. He was for several years the editor of the *Christian Reformer*, and the author of a brief history of "Old Nonconformity at Dukinfield." The Rev. John Gordon, who had previously laboured at Coseley, Coventry, and Edinburgh, succeeded Mr. Aspland at Dukinfield in 1858, and resigned in 1862. He was followed in 1863 by the Rev. J. P. Hopps, educated at the Baptist College, Leicester, and previously of Sheffield. He remained until 1869, and is now at Leicester. The Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, M.A., educated at Manchester New College, London, and minister at Taunton for a few years, held the pastorate from 1870 to 1874. In the latter year he removed to London, where he still labours. From 1875 to 1884 the Rev. G. H. Vance, B.D., whose education was received at Harvard, U.S.A., was minister. He is now at Dublin. The present minister is the Rev. Hugon S. Taylor, M.A., who was educated at London and Cambridge. He began his labours here in 1885.

The terrible storm of January 7th, 1839, destroyed the windows, and damaged its roof, so that except for the purpose of funerals and marriages it was not again used by the congregation.

III.—ALBION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

ABOUT the year 1780 a Mr. Walker, who lived near the Ashton Churchyard, dissatisfied with the teaching of the Rev. William Buckley, of Dukinfield, left the old chapel, taking with him a number of friends, and began to hold services in his own house. "This, as far as can be gleaned," writes one, "was the first society of Independents in the borough."¹ The history of this effort is given in the following passage :—

For about ten years this little company held together, meeting on Sunday mornings for fellowship and mutual exhortation, and at the evening services enjoyed the preaching of ministers from Manchester, Delph, Greenacres, and other places. But, as the neighbouring pastors were unable to continue this help, and at the same time do justice to their own places, the failure of regular preaching had an injurious effect upon the church, and about 1790 it ceased to exist. The few who had stood firm to the last did not abandon their principles, but walked distances of five or six miles in order to benefit by the communion and instruction of Independent Churches in the district.²

About three years afterwards a second attempt was made, and we have the following interesting account of the opening of a large room for worship.³ The room was in connection with Mr. Oldham's mill, Peaceable Street (now Fleet Street), and had accommodation for about 400 persons :—

The town of Ashton, in Lancashire, had long been destitute of gospel light, eminently the seat of prejudice and enmity; it pleased the All-wise and gracious Head of the Church to dispose the minds of some neighbouring ministers to seek a place where they might preach alternately for a time, by way of proving the spirits of the people and the designs of Providence. After several fruitless attempts, a commodious room was provided; and on the 1st of August, 1793, the Rev. N. Blackburn, of Delph, and the Rev. T. Kennedy, M.A., of Manchester, preached to a numerous and attentive congregation from the words of Christ, *Take heed WHAT ye hear, and Take heed HOW ye hear*. Since this period the place has been attended beyond expectation, a *proper meeting* is established, and it is hoped that some are

¹ "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne," p. 8.

² *Ibid.*

³ Urwick, and other writers on Congregationalism in this district, wrongly give 1795 as the date of the commencement of this second effort. The building was opened in 1793.

already asking their way to Zion. We trust that the gentlemen engaged in this good work will persevere through every discouragement, that the blessing of many perishing souls will come upon them, and that their generous example will be zealously imitated.¹

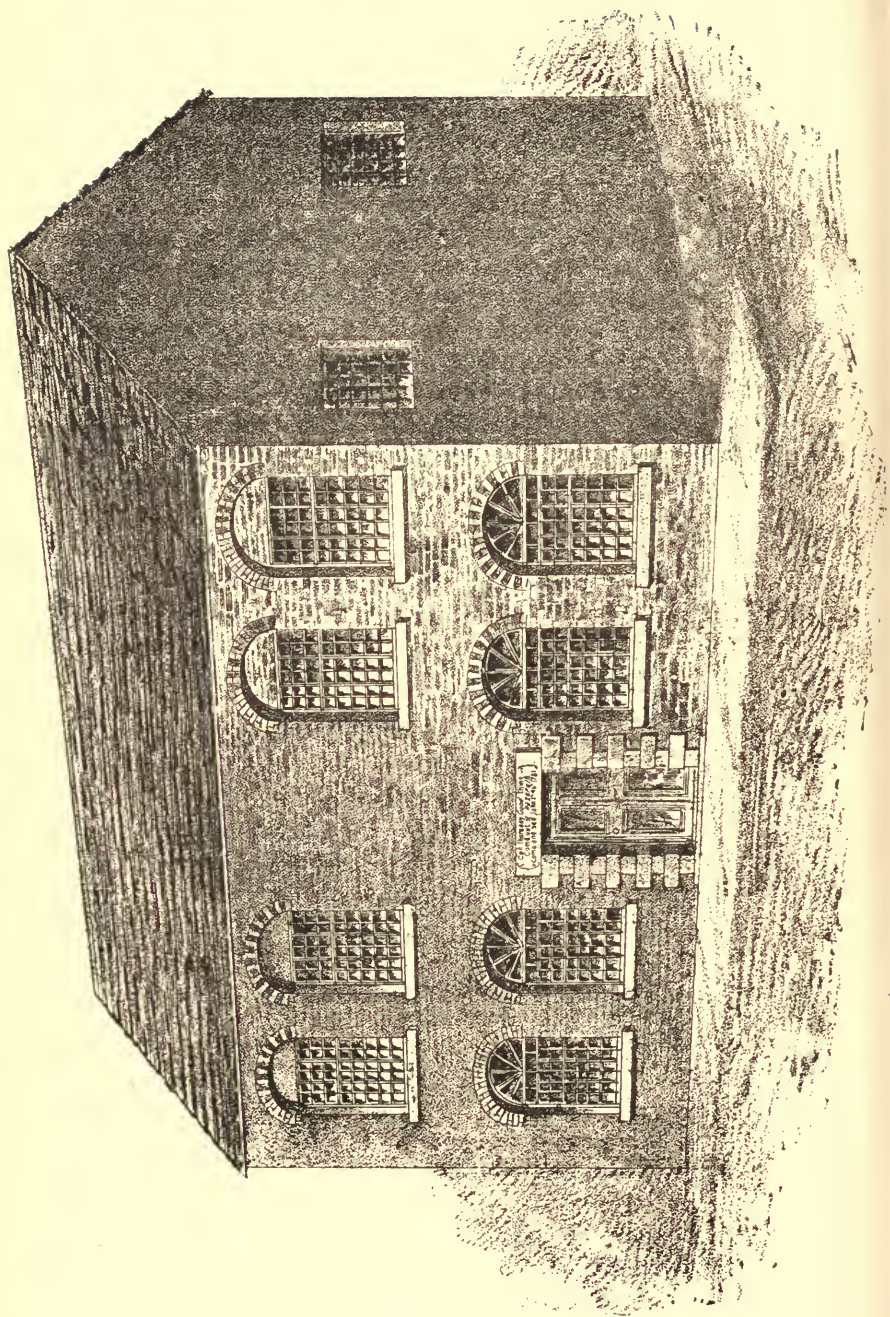
Failure of supply, "combined with strife within their own borders," shattered this second effort in the direction of church formation, and after "a precarious existence of five or six years it came to an untimely end."² The erection of Providence Chapel, Dukinfield, for the Rev. Wm. Marsh, of which an account will be given subsequently, resulted in "most of the Independents, who still continued to meet in private houses in Ashton," joining this "young and flourishing church on the other side of the river." A few, however, are said to have held together, and to have kept up regular preaching with "great credit to themselves," the principal share of this work "falling to the late Mr. James Lord, long a devoted and valued friend of Independency in Ashton." During the ministry of the Rev. T. Bennett, who succeeded Mr. Marsh at Dukinfield, a difference between him and his people arose upon a question of church discipline, and fourteen members left, "crossed the river, and united themselves to the small band of resolute Independents in Ashton," amongst them being Mr. Nathaniel Buckley. This "increase of numbers and accession of strength" soon made itself felt, and the true history of Congregationalism in Ashton may be said to begin at this point. In 1815 the Rev. Richard Slate says:—

"A few persons of piety and influence, attached to the doctrines and principles of evangelical Congregationalism, fitted up a room for public worship, which for some time was supplied by lay preachers from Manchester and the neighbourhood. The attendance for the first six months was small, frequently not amounting to twenty persons in the morning."³ Respecting this early home of the Albion Church—which was all that could be obtained at

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1794, p. 118.

² "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne," p. 10. The author, however, adds that it is not clear that the church thus formed was "ever entirely disbanded." One who was well informed, says the friends never ceased to assemble, meeting occasionally in Ashton and Dukinfield.

³ "History of the Lancashire Congregational Union," p. 39.



THE OLD CHURCH IN HADDO'S VADIA

the time—we have the following interesting passage, written in 1867 :—

The Earl of Stamford and Warrington, and lord of the manor of Ashton, on being applied to for land, declared that no Dissenting Chapel should ever be erected on his estates, and, it is said, caused a clause to be inserted in all his leases to that effect. Baffled in their endeavours to obtain an eligible situation for their religious home, the church had recourse to an obscure and unsightly building, turning out to the left off Crickets' Lane. There the old building stands to this hour, with its quaint inscription : " Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth ? Come and see." Infinite good has come to the world from Nazareth, and it is not too much to say that much light and blessing has come to many souls from that dull and dingy room in Crickets' Lane.¹ Within it, what is called the Albion Independent Church held in 1816 its first communion in memory of Him of Nazareth, and of Calvary, too. Twenty-seven joined in that sacred celebration. All of them, except one, have passed away from the waiting and wrestling Church below to the triumphant Church above. She who remains is Mary Smith, then living in Dukinfield nursery, but since that, long and honourably known as the wife of the Rev. Robert Moffat, the intrepid and devoted Missionary to Southern Africa.²

In the early part of 1816, Ashton, with Oldham, is mentioned as "a very promising sphere of itinerant labours ;" and a "neat and commodious" building, called "Refuge Chapel," capable of "seating 500 persons, was opened April 9th, 1817, by Messrs. Bradley and Ely."³ The chapel stood in an alley (now Albion Street) off Crickets' Lane ; its cost is given as about £1,000, and the "principal instrument" in its erection is said to be Mr. Nathaniel Buckley.³ On the first Sunday in January, 1818, the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, a student from Idle Academy, became the minister. His ordination took place on the 14th of May following, when his pastor, the Rev. James Scott, of Cleckheaton, gave him the charge from Prov. xi. 30 ; the Rev. William Vint, Tutor of Idle Academy, "delivered the introductory discourse and

¹ The old chapel in "Harrop's Yard," off Crickets' Lane, was built a little before the end of last century by the New Connexion Methodists, who had just seceded from the old Wesleyan body. It was abandoned by them for larger premises in Stamford Street. After the Congregationalists left it, the Roman Catholics worshipped in it for a time.

² "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne," pp. 12, 13.

³ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1818, p. 355.

received the confession ;” and amongst others who assisted was the Rev. Mr. La Trobe (Moravian minister). The growing congregations who waited on Mr. Sutcliffe’s ministry rendered an enlargement necessary, which eventually was made, giving sitting accommodation in all to about 620 persons.¹ “At a church meeting held in July, 1833,” writes the Rev. Richard Slate, “it was concluded, as the chapel was insufficient to accommodate the increasing congregation, to erect a new place of worship on a large scale on an adjoining plot of ground, then occupied by cottages. The foundation stone was laid² amidst a large concourse of people, on the 23rd of May, 1834, and the present elegant and spacious chapel, capable of seating twelve hundred persons, was opened for divine worship on the 10th of May, 1835.”³ The preachers on the occasion were morning and evening Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, and afternoon the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, pastor. On the following Wednesday, May 13th, Dr. McAll, of Manchester, preached, and the collections of the united services amounted to £367 4s. 9d. The cost of the chapel, including the “purchase of premises,” is given as £3,427 1s. 3d.⁴ On Tuesday evening, January 8th, 1850, Mr. Sutcliffe received from his people “a purse of gold containing £1,000, and a fine copy of the Oxford demy folio Bible, value thirty guineas, bound in the most handsome style.”⁵ More than thirty years of unremitting toils had left their mark upon the pastor, and he began to “feel the necessity of abridging his labours”; but “some alterations he suggested for this end not meeting with perfect concurrence, he resigned his charge in May, 1851.”⁶ In January of the following year he became pastor of the

¹ The re-opening services took place on August 20th, 1827. The enlargement was made by adding the original schoolroom to the chapel.

² By Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, the senior deacon of the church.

³ “History of the Lancashire Congregational Union,” p. 40.

⁴ “Evangelical Magazine” for 1835, p. 291. These were the formal re-opening services, but the church took leave of Refuge Chapel on March 29th, when Mr. Sutcliffe preached to his people on “Arise, let us go hence,” entering into possession of the new structure, which was by no means finished, on the following Sunday, April 5th, when Mr. Sutcliffe was again the preacher, his texts being—morning, Haggai ii., 9 ; afternoon, 1 Cor. ii., 2 ; evening, 2 Tim. i., 8.

⁵ “Christian Witness” for 1850, p. 90.

⁶ “Congregational Year Book” for 1860, p. 208.

Congregational Church at Longsight, where he was instrumental in building "Ivy Chapel," in 1853; but softening of the brain led to his retirement in 1856.¹ He died at Ashton, April 20th, 1859, aged sixty-four years, and was interred in the Harpurhey Cemetery. Mr. Sutcliffe was antiquarian in his tastes, and in 1841 was elected a Fellow of the Antiquarian Society. He was the author of a "Memoir of Emily Rowland," the copyright of which he presented to the Religious Tract Society. Near the pulpit of Albion Chapel is a handsome memorial tablet, thus inscribed:—

Sacred to the Memory of the

REV. JONATHAN SUTCLIFFE, F.A.S.,

For more than thirty-nine years the faithful and beloved pastor of the Church assembling in this place of worship.

His fervour in the closet, his earnestness in the pulpit, his greatness of attachment to Christian principle, his holy life, and unwearied labours were crowned by the Divine blessing with extensive usefulness.

His flock have erected this tablet in gratitude for his services, and in affection for his memory.

He was born on the 30th December, 1794, ordained 25th May, 1818, and died 20th April, 1859.

"He was a good man, and full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

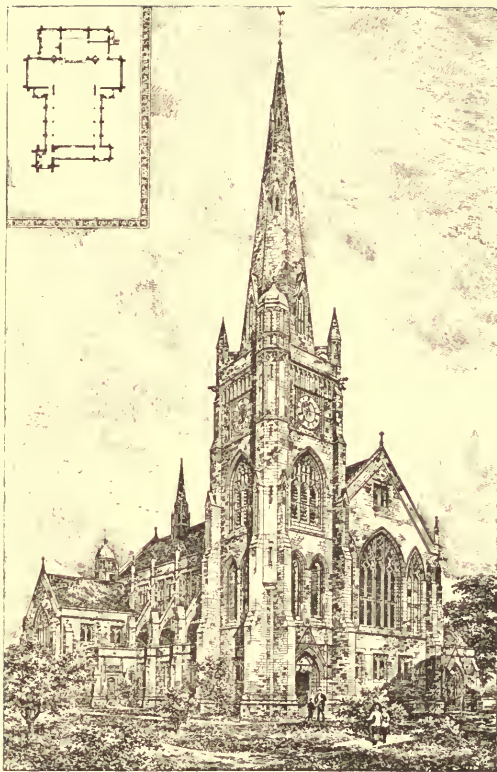
The Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., educated at Lancashire College, and ordained pastor of St. James's Chapel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, April 15th, 1846, succeeded Mr. Sutcliffe in 1851. An energetic and useful ministry was brought to a conclusion in 1865, when Mr. Rogers removed to Clapham, London, where he still labours. In that year he occupied the chair of the Lancashire Congregational Union, and in 1874 that of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. There are few ministers so well known and deservedly respected as Mr. Rogers, and none who have more vigorously defended the interests of Congregationalism both on the platform and in the press. The son of a Lancashire Congregational minister, the Rev. Thomas Rogers, of Prescot and Warrington,² he is connected with the county by the most sacred ties, and has always recognised the fact by placing at its disposal the most generous service. The

¹ Vide ante p. 161.

² Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

Rev. J. Hutchison followed Mr. Rogers in 1865. He was educated at the Glasgow Theological Hall, and ordained to the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Elie, Fifeshire, on Wednesday, August 26th, 1852, whence he removed to Dunfermline, and thence to Ashton-under-Lyne. For nearly thirty years Mr. Hutchison has upheld the best traditions of the Albion Church, and his ministry has been exceedingly fruitful. More than once have important churches invited him to transfer his services elsewhere, but he has remained loyal to his people at Ashton. Respected and beloved by his brethren in the ministry he was invited by them to occupy the position of President of the Lancashire Congregational Union in 1882; and on the completion of 21 years of ministerial service at Albion, his people recognised the event in a very substantial way. The crown of a long and honourable ministry will be the New Albion Church, now in course of building. This large and magnificent structure is being erected on the Stamford Terrace plot, formerly occupied by the late Mr. William Sunderland's Academy. It is intended to accommodate 1,100 persons, and its cost, including £2,000 for the site, will be about £40,000. There are not many churches in the county or out of it that could face half that amount with any degree of equanimity; but Albion Church, from the days of Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, the "principal instrument" in the erection of the old "Refuge Chapel" in 1817, to the present time, has been favoured with a considerable number of wealthy and generous supporters. The subscription list, too lengthy to be inserted here, is a fine testimony to the power of voluntaryism. The following are a few of the larger amounts in the first list, many of which have since been doubled. After the pastor and people have raised some £11,000, the remainder has been generously promised by Mr. Abel Buckley, whatever it may be, that the church may be opened free from debt:

Mr. Rupert Mason	£1,500
Mr. Nathaniel Buckley.....	£1,000
Mr. S. Mason	£500
Mr. Herbert Knott.....	£500
Mr. G. H. Kenworthy	£250
Mrs. John Knott.....	£250
Messrs. Abel and Jesse Haworth	£250
Mr. C. T. Bradbury	£250
Mrs. Hugh Mason	£250
Miss Mason.....	£250



ALBION NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The foundation stone of the New Albion Church was laid on Saturday, September 13th, 1890, by Mr. Abel Buckley, J.P., grandson of Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, previously named, and the generous donor of the tower and spire; and the mallet and trowel were presented to him by Miss Muriel Mason, daughter of Mr. Rupert Mason, and the fifth in descent from Mr. Nathaniel Buckley. Amongst the ministers who took part in the ceremony, in addition to the pastor, were the Revs. J. G. Rogers, B.A., "the grand old man of English Congregational Nonconformity"; Dr. Alexander Thomson, Mr. Hutchison's personal friend for many years; and the Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., Chairman for the year of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. Mr. N. B. Sutcliffe, also, son of the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, representing the "connecting link between the old church and congregation, and the movement which they that day inaugurated," delivered an interesting address. The building is nearing completion, and it is expected that the congregation will be able to take possession of their new home in 1894.

Three important Mission stations are sustained by the church, to which a few sentences must be devoted. The work at Charlestown was commenced in 1862, meetings being first held in a room made out of two cottages, "so dark," writes one, "we were obliged to keep the gas burning in an afternoon, no ventilation at all, a very damp flag floor, a miserable and unhealthy place." An old mill was next taken in Wellington Road, but the increase in the scholars made still larger premises imperative. It was felt that a new building was the only way in which the necessities of the case could be met, but the committee appointed to consider the matter experienced difficulty in obtaining a site. Mr. Hugh Mason, however, purchased a group of cottages, and generously handed them over to the Committee for the use of the Mission. The cottages were accordingly taken down, and in August, 1866, Mr. Hugh Mason laid the foundation stone of Charlestown Chapel and Schools. The new premises cost about £1,500, towards which the Bi-centenary Committee gave £200. The accommodation provided was for about 300 persons, and the opening services took place in March, 1867. In 1885, an important enlargement took place in the shape of new classrooms

at a cost of over £850. The Mission is very vigorous, and the work done by it most praiseworthy. The Hurst Nook Mission was commenced on August 20th, 1871, in an old room, formerly a pigeon cote, where sixteen children assembled. On Good Friday, March 26th, 1875, the present building was opened by a public tea meeting, over which the Rev. John Hutchison, pastor of the parent church, presided. This place also was enlarged at a cost of about £200 in 1886. At Taunton, a little village a short distance north-west of Ashton, is a third Mission station, where services have been conducted for many years. For several years, Mr. William Wood was employed as Town Missionary by the Albion Church, and much of his time was given to these Mission stations. In this connection it may be mentioned that the vigorous churches, now self-supporting, at Ryecroft, Hyde, Stalybridge, Denton, Mossley, Droylsden, and Dukinfield, owe their existence largely to the self-sacrificing efforts of the Albion Church.

Amongst the manifold forms of Christian activity, to which the church has given itself, is the large Albion Sunday School, through which hundreds of young people have passed into useful positions in society. The foundation stone of this building was laid by Mr. Hugh Mason, on Friday, 1861, and on Good Friday of the following year, it was opened by a sermon from the Rev. A. McLaren, B.A., of Manchester, delivered to an audience of about 2,000 people. The cost of the building was about £14,000. Albion Day School also has obtained a wide celebrity, of which A. Park, Esq., J.P., has been Head Master since 1867. The church has a strong P.S.A. Society, of which Mr. Park is President.

Much might be written, and appropriately written, about many worthy men whose names are so deeply interwoven into the church's history, but space forbids. A brief passage must suffice, and it is from the lips of the Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A. (than whom no one can speak more competently upon the subject) on the occasion of the stone laying of the New Albion Church :—

Who can ever forget some of those men? I cannot. Who can ever forget that truly saintly man, Samuel B. Tomlins? With a remarkable unworldliness, he nevertheless was most free and generous and admirable

in his judgment of others. I cannot refer to many to-day. I could mention Mr. Haughton, Mr. Sunderland, and a number of others, but I want simply to mention one or two typical men. Who does not remember, especially amongst the working men of this congregation, that singularly fine specimen of the British workman in his highest development Joseph Garlick, a man who in brain and experience was considerably above his position, and a man on whom I used to look with undoubting confidence. Yes, but in these schools, with the recollection of the great ceremonial which we had at the laying of their foundation and at their opening; with the recollection of all that he did to make Ashton what it is, who in this assembly can ever forget the name of my beloved friend and tried and trusted comrade, Hugh Mason? Don't you think it must be a joy to me, who knew him when we were young men together, when we struggled and fought together—yes, for we had many a hard fight in those times—do you think it can be anything but a joy to me to see his children and his children's children here to-day, adding grace and interest and earnestness to these spirited proceedings?

Albion Church is one of those which does honour to Lancashire Congregationalism. Its history from the beginning is an inspiration. It has only had three pastors in the course of seventy five years, a fact as much to the credit of the church as to the three worthy brethren who have laboured there. It has founded many other churches, but been happily spared dissensions; and though rapidly nearing its centenary, it has all the vigour of youth. It only remains to be said that a year ago, the Rev. N. de G Davies, M.A., B.D., a student from New College, accepted an invitation to become Mr. Hutchison's assistant in his important work.

IV.—RYECROFT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

THE origin of the second Congregational church in Ashton-under-Lyne was from the old Independent Church at Albion Street, in the east end of the town. The object was to disseminate the principles of Independency at the west end of the town, and at the same time to set free greater accommodation at the parent place for many who had long been waiting. Accordingly, on the 7th of May, 1848, an amicable separation took place, and eighty-six church members, with many others of the congregation, entered upon the work of beginning the new interest. On the evening of that day

the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, the pastor of the parent church, conducted service in the upper room of the Ryecroft British School, and regular Sunday services then began. The school had been built by the Albion Church in 1847. It was designed for a religious and Congregational preaching place from the first, while the trust deed required that it should be used also as a Day School. The Rev. R. W. Hamilton, D.D., of Leeds, had preached at its opening, April 28th, 1847. The church was formed on January 14th, 1849, under the guidance of the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, and it consisted of the number of members already named. For a time students from Rotherham or from Manchester, with the occasional assistance of neighbouring ministers, supplied the pulpit, till on Good Friday, April 18th, 1851, the Rev. Wm. Thomas, a student from Rotherham College, was ordained to the pastorate. "For more commodious accommodation," the services were conducted in Albion Street Chapel, which was "kindly lent for the occasion by the minister and deacons." The Rev. David Jones, of Booth, near Halifax—Mr. Thomas's late pastor—gave the introductory discourse, and Dr. Stowell, the President of Chesnut College, but formerly at Rotherham, gave the charge to the minister. "Two hundred ministers and friends" dined together between the morning and evening services in the Ryecroft preaching room. In 1853 the present chapel, with accommodation for 900 persons, was erected at a cost of about £4,000, both the church and the Sunday School having largely increased. Towards the end of 1855 Mr. Thomas removed to College Chapel, Bradford, and subsequently to Leeds. A few years ago he retired from the ministry, and is now resident in Leeds. The Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., a student from Spring Hill College, became the new pastor in succession to Mr. Thomas in 1856, being ordained as such on Good Friday of that year. Mr. Green has remained with his first and only charge in spite of tempting offers to other spheres. In 1876 he was Chairman of the Lancashire Congregational Union; in 1890 of the Congregational Union of England and Wales; and he has been both Chairman and Secretary of the Lancashire Independent College. His loyalty to Congregationalism, and his able and persistent defence thereof, have won for him an honourable place in the denomination, whilst

his quiet and sparkling humour has brought sunshine to many a dull and un-interesting debate in its assemblies. Mr. Green is the author, amongst other works, of "Porches of the Temple;" and "John Woolman, a Study for Young Men."

The energy and the zeal of the continually growing church took the form of establishing, after a great deal of consideration, an outpost about a mile from the chapel. The neighbourhood chosen was Audenshaw, and the district round the Guide Bridge Station, on the Manchester and Sheffield Railway. In November, 1874, the project was determined on. In the following year a room was rented, and was occupied as a Sunday School in circumstances of great encouragement. It soon became necessary to erect a building, and a very suitable site having been secured, the foundation stone was laid on June 24th, 1876, by Miss Fanny Buckley, of Ryecroft Hall. The building was opened in April, 1877, and not only has all debt been cleared off, but the land has been purchased, so that there is no encumbrance of any kind. The school is known as the Hooley Hill School; and as a Day School, a Sunday School, a preaching station for regular Sunday evening services, and a centre of many forms of Christian enterprise, it has so far been signally blessed.

V.—CONGREGATIONALISM IN DUKINFIELD.

REFERENCE has already been made to the secession from the old Nonconformist interest in Dukinfield during the pastorate of the Rev. Wm. Buckley, the secessionists holding their meetings mainly in Ashton. "Towards the close of 1805," says the Rev. Wm. Urwick, M.A., "Mr. William Marsh, from London, came to reside at Dukinfield and consented to preach every Sabbath evening in a dwelling-house. An out-building was afterwards obtained, and fitted up sufficient to accommodate one hundred persons. Here a Congregational Church was formed."¹ On January 1st, 1807, "a neat and commodious chapel (42 feet by 36 feet)" was

¹ "Nonconformity in Cheshire," p. 349; vide also "Congregational Magazine" for 1820, p. 455.

opened, when the Rev. Wm. Evans, of Stockport, preached from Hag. ii., 9; the Rev. Wm. Roby from Psalm xcvi. 6; and the Rev. N. Blackburn from Psalm cxviii. 25.¹ In the following May Mr. Marsh was ordained,² and, after a brief but successful ministry "among the congregation which he had been the instrument of collecting and establishing," he removed to Cannon Street, Manchester, in the midsummer of 1808.³ In the same year the Rev. T. Bennett, of Congleton, followed. It was during his ministry that an important secession took place which led to the immediate formation of the Albion Church in Ashton.⁴ In 1818 Mr. Bennett removed to Hatherlow where he continued to minister until his death, which took place suddenly on Sunday evening, October 16th, 1842. He had been "a faithful minister of Christ for half a century."⁵ In 1819 a Mr. Dunkerley, an occasional preacher from Manchester, followed, and to him succeeded a Mr. Ransey.⁶ The Rev. Robert Ivy followed in September 1827. He was educated at Hackney and ordained pastor of the church at Brampton, in Cumberland, on September 2nd, 1819. His ministry at Dukinfield continued until 1841, and was so successful that the chapel had to be enlarged, and a schoolroom and parsonage were erected. Mr. Ivy was killed whilst going to Southport on his annual holidays. The following account of the tragic event is from the Crescent Road Bazaar Handbook:—

¹ The foundation stone of this building, which had accommodation for about 400 persons, was laid on July 31st, 1806, by F. D. Astley, Esq.

² Mr. Marsh presented the first Communion Service to the young church, upon which is the following not very accurate inscription:—"The gift of the Rev. Wm. Marsh to the church of Christ, meeting at Dukinfield, by whom they were united in church fellowship, and ordained their pastor, May 21st., 1807."

³ Vide ante page 123. Since the account of Cannon Street Church was written it has been ascertained that Mr. Marsh did not immediately go thence to Charlesworth, as there stated, but ministered for a short time to a congregation at Ardwick (vide ante page 199.)

⁴ Vide ante page 297.

⁵ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1843, p. 133.

⁶ Ramsden is the name given in the Crescent Road Congregational Church Bazaar Handbook (1892). It is there said that he was a Scotchman, who came ostensibly as an independent, but who was really a Presbyterian. He "soon made his doctrines known, and unpleasantness arising he resigned and left the district."

They proceeded on the 7th September, 1841, from Manchester by coach (Mrs. Ivy having an objection to travelling on the railway), and at Euxton near Preston, owing to rain, Mr. Ivy took an outside seat next to the driver to allow a lady to go inside; his fellow passenger outside was a Mr. Kershaw, who was afterwards a member of Parliament for Stockport. At Euxton there was a level crossing on the then newly made North Union Railway, and in going over it a train of empty waggons ran into and killed two of the horses and overturned the coach. Mr. Ivy was thrown from the coach underneath the train and instantly killed. He was the only passenger who lost his life, and his death caused a profound sensation in Dukinfield, and universal regret. He was interred at the chapel, but we are unable to state who preached the funeral sermon. A tablet was erected to his memory and is at the present time placed at the foot of the pulpit stairs in the Crescent Road Chapel. The following is a copy of the inscription:—

“To the memory of the Rev. ROBERT IVY, who, after being pastor of the church assembling in this place fourteen years, was suddenly removed from his family and his labours whilst on a journey to Southport, in consequence of a collision between the coach on which he was riding and a waggon train on the North Union Railway, near the Euxton Station, on the 7th September, 1841, in the 55th year of his age. ‘His was the blessedness of the servant of Christ, whom his Lord, having come at an hour he looked not for, was found of Him in peace.’”

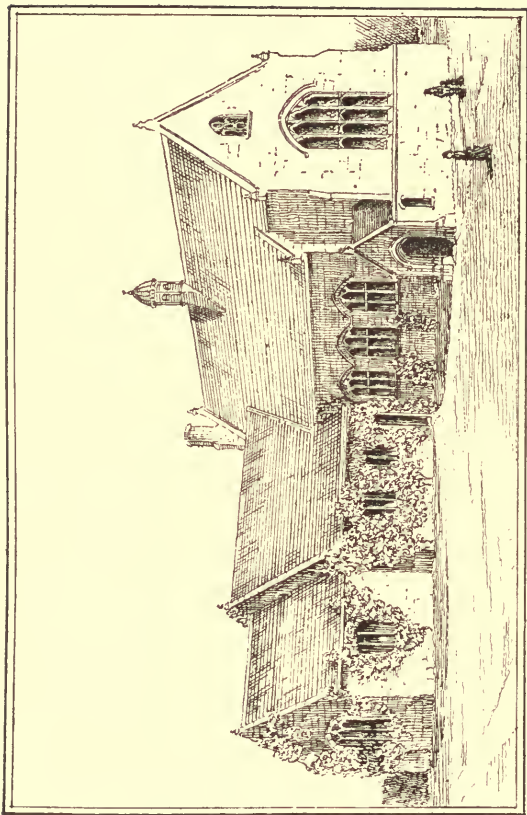
In 1843 the Rev. Charles Farnsworth, a blind gentleman, who had formerly laboured at Sutton, near Chester, and Hanover Chapel, Liverpool,¹ was chosen pastor, and he remained such until 1861, when he resigned. He died December 9th, 1865, aged sixty-four years, and was interred in the graveyard of Providence Chapel, Dukinfield. Mr. Farnsworth may be considered the last minister, for about the time of his departure the church had declined considerably. Shortly afterwards the chapel was closed, many of the members joining the new interest at Furnace Hill, of which an account must now be given.

Furnace Hill, now Dukinfield Crescent Congregational Church, is the outcome of a branch school commenced about 1825 by the Albion Church, Ashton. The district was greatly in need of such an agency, and from the first Furnace Hill School met with considerable success. On Sunday, February 12th, 1860, preaching services were commenced, and on the 21st of March following a church was formed, sixty-two members being transferred from Albion Church for the purpose. On August 21st, 1861, the Rev.

¹ Vide vol. vi. of “Lancashire Nonconformity.”

J. T. Barker, B.A., a student from Lancashire College, was ordained as the first minister. A larger place of worship soon became necessary, and "in the meantime Providence Chapel, which stood not far from Furnace Hill School, was offered for sale. It was bought by Mr. John Knott and Mr. N. B. Sutcliffe, and handsomely offered to the church in Dukinfield." The offer was accepted; but, as the chapel had stood from the beginning of the century, it had fallen greatly into decay. Encouraged, therefore, by liberal proposals from the Bicentenary Committee and from "generous friends in Ashton and other places," it was resolved to erect a new building upon the spot where Providence Chapel had so long stood. Accordingly, the foundation stone of the present structure, with sitting accommodation for 900 persons, was laid on July 1st, 1865, by Mr. Thomas Collier, a deacon of the church. It was opened on Sept. 20th, 1866, and cost about £6,000, towards which the Bicentenary Committee voted £1,000. Mr. Barker remained the minister until August, 1878, when he resigned, and subsequently took charge of the church at Whaley Bridge for a short time. He is now resident at Leeds without a pastorate. His successor was the Rev. William Glover, a student from Lancashire College, who began his labours in July, 1879. He resigned in May, 1884, and for a short time devoted himself to journalism, being editor of the *Northern Advance* during the brief period of its existence. Subsequently he became the pastor of the Brookfield Congregational Church, near Glossop, and is now at Heaton Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The present minister, the Rev. D. R. James, a student from Nottingham Institute, succeeded Mr. Glover in May, 1885. The church has been in receipt of help from the funds of the Lancashire County Union since 1879.

In 1857 schoolrooms were erected at Dukinfield Hall at a cost of £700, where, in addition to Sunday School work, services were conducted on Sunday evenings by lay preachers from Albion Church. Towards the close of 1867 the Rev. J. B. Walton, B.A., LL.B., a student from Lancashire College, accepted an invitation to become the first minister, and the County Union voted the sum of £50 towards the support of the cause. A church was formed on Sunday, March 24th, 1872, seventy-two members being



DUKINFIELD OLD HALL CHAPEL AS RESTORED IN 1872.

dismissed from Albion Church, Ashton, for the purpose, on which occasion the Revs. J. Hutchison and T. Green, M.A., conducted the service. In 1873 the present chapel, with sitting accommodation for 550 persons, became its home. Around this building—the original of which is thus described, “nave, 32 feet by 24 feet; chancel, 18 feet by five feet,”—gather the most hallowed memories, and very appropriately is it now employed for Congregational purposes, for it is the original chapel, enlarged and restored, of the old Dukinfield Hall, where Samuel Eaton formerly ministered. It was purchased by Mr. Hugh Mason and Mr. Nathaniel Buckley, and generously offered to the congregation for its use. The sum of £4,000 was expended in adapting it to its new purpose, towards which the Chapel Building Society provided £700. The foundation stone was laid on Whit-Friday, May 24th, 1872, by Mr. Nathaniel Buckley. The opening services took place on Sunday, July 13th, 1873, and the day is “rendered memorable” as one of the last occasions on which the Rev. Thomas Binney, D.D., preached. In 1873 Mr. Walton removed to Wem, in Shropshire, where he still ministers, and in the following year the Rev. J. Peill, from Kendal, succeeded him. In 1881 the pastor was able to write:—

During the past seven years the friends here have paid off over £1,400 of debt, and reduced their need of the generous aid given by H. Mason, Esq., M.P., and N. Buckley, Esq., to the extent of £70 per annum, and now they claim their freedom from the aid rendered by the Union.

The pressure of the times compelled the church to again seek the help of the Union in 1887, and in the following year Mr. Peill removed to Huddersfield, where he still labours. In 1889 the present minister, the Rev. J. M. Craven, succeeded Mr. Peill. The church is still in receipt of help from the funds of the Union. Connected with the Dukinfield Old Hall Church is a branch at Newton Wood, where a school was commenced in 1876. In 1884 the church purchased the Victoria School from the Newton Moor Spinning Company for the sum of £560. There is accommodation for 300 persons, and Sunday and week-day services are conducted there, towards which the County Union gives substantial assistance.

VI.—DENTON AND DROYLSDEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

IN the spring of 1836 a committee of friends, connected with the Albion Church at Ashton-under-Lyne, was formed "to consider the propriety of commencing an interest at Denton;" and a decision was arrived at "to commence preaching immediately on Sabbath evenings, and to proceed with the erection of a chapel during the summer, provided the consent of the Lancashire County Union could be obtained."¹ The Rev. J. Sutcliffe, minister of Albion Church, secured the "sanction" of the County Union together with a grant of £50; and preaching was commenced in a cottage, nearly opposite the old Post Office, on the second Sunday in May, 1836. On the 2nd of July following Mr. S. B. Tomlins, banker, of Ashton-under-Lyne, laid the foundation stone of a small chapel, which had accommodation for about 200 persons. This was opened for public worship on Wednesday, November 16th of the same year, when Dr. McAll, of Manchester, preached, the services being continued on the Sunday following by the Revs. R. Fletcher, of Manchester, and J. Sutcliffe. The liberality of the Ashton friends in connection with this event is especially emphasised in contemporary records, and it is stated that the "first instalment towards the building of a chapel was a bequest of £50, left by the late Nathaniel Buckley, Esq., of Carr Hill, whose descendants have been good friends to the interest at Denton, and have contributed liberally to its support."² The services were conducted, at this time, mainly by young men from Hyde and Ashton, amongst whom may be named Messrs. James Lord, J.P.; S. B. Tomlins; Samuel Bostock, of Hyde; Abel Buckley, W. Tweedale; Wm. Sunderland, and the Rev. Wm. Ashton, now a missionary in Africa, then "one of the Albion young men who preached his first sermon" in Denton Chapel.³

¹ Manual for 1887 of the Hope Congregational Church, Denton.

² "Church Manual."

³ It deserves to be mentioned that amongst "the first and most interested attendants" at the services were Messrs. Samuel Taylor and John Rockliffe, of Haughton. These had been connected with the Greenacres Congregational Church, Oldham, but, "having removed to Denton and commenced business there as cotton spinners, they interested themselves in the establishment of the Independent Chapel at Denton." From this circumstance the Rev. G. G. Waddington ("Historical and Biographical Notices," p. 409) improperly claims Denton Chapel as an offshoot from Greenacres.

The Rev. Thomas Horatio Smith, a student from Rotherham College, became the first minister, entering upon his labours as such on August 20th, 1837. On the 20th of November following a church was formed, seven members entering into fellowship.¹ The ministers who assisted in the service were the Revs. E. Edwards, of Hyde; G. Hoyle, of Stalybridge; J. Sutcliffe, and the pastor. An immediate enlargement of the chapel "six yards, for the accommodation of the people," having become necessary and having obtained "the concurrence of the Ashton friends," the undertaking was proceeded with; and on the 15th of July, 1838, reopening services were held, when sermons were preached by the pastor and the Revs. Dr. Clunie, of Manchester, and N. K. Pugsley, of Stockport. Three days afterwards Mr. Smith was ordained, the Rev. Richard Fletcher, of Manchester, giving the pastoral charge from 1 Tim. iv., 11, and the Rev. Joseph Galland, of Greenacres, exhorting the congregation from 1 Cor. xvi., 10. In addition to his labours at Denton Mr. Smith conducted services occasionally at Mossley and Droylsden, and with his name therefore the origin of those two churches must be associated. At the end of April, 1843, he resigned and removed to Patricroft; but he "ultimately left the ministry and died in comparative poverty."² The Rev. John Fogg from Cawick, in Yorkshire, began his ministry in succession to Mr. Smith on the third Sunday in July, 1843. In March, 1848, he resigned, and subsequently held pastorates at Easington Lane, Durham, and Winslow, Bucks. The Rev. John Holroyd was the next minister. He was born at Mirfield, in January, 1795, educated at Airedale College, preached for a short time at Woolton, near Liverpool, was ordained pastor over the Congregational Church at Delph, August 11th, 1824, whence he removed to Denton in July, 1848. He died November 8th, 1849, and was succeeded in the pastorate in the early part of 1851 by the Rev. John Waddington, who, also, had been educated at Airedale College, and was ordained October 9th, 1839, "to the work of a missionary in Berbice," where he laboured

¹ The names of the "seven" were John Rockliffe, Gabriel Lupton, Samuel Bromley, James Potter, John Whitehead, Robert Tatton, and Margaret Fidler, all of whom have long since died.

² "Church Manual."

for several years. Mr. Waddington's ministry saw several improvements in the old chapel, and eventually the erection of a new one. The foundation stone of this the present handsome building, called "Hope Chapel," was laid on April 14th, 1876, by Miss Bradbury, whose father, the late Mr. Bradbury, imparted a "great impetus" to the movement by his gift of £500. In September, 1877, the building was opened for worship. The cost, including alteration of the old chapel and other expenses, amounted to about £6,000, and the sitting accommodation is for some 700 persons. It was during Mr. Waddington's ministry in 1865 that the church ceased to be a recipient from the Union Funds. He resigned in 1885, and is now resident without charge at Higher Broughton. The Rev. J. A. Meeson, M.A., LL.B., a student from Lancashire College, assumed the pastorate in 1886, being ordained on the 22nd of November, when Dr. Scott, Principal of Lancashire College, gave the charge to the minister from 2 Cor. iv. 3. Mr. Meeson resigned in 1889, and is now pastor of the Congregational Church at Harrogate. The Rev. W. D. Dale, from the Yorkshire United College, was minister from 1889 to 1892. He is now resident at Macclesfield without charge, and the pulpit of Hope Chapel remains still vacant.

The honour of introducing Congregationalism into Droylsden belongs to the Rev. J. Sutcliffe, of Albion Church, who, shortly after his settlement at Ashton, "was accustomed to preach in a cottage house at Lumb, in the confines of Droylsden, and subsequently in other houses in Droylsden."¹ About the close of 1837 Lee Meaden, John Hartley, George Shaw, and a few other earnest Christians commenced a Sunday School in what was afterwards known as the Temperance Room, in Market Street. Four teachers and twenty scholars met the first Sunday, and a few months afterwards a Sunday evening service was begun. In 1838 Mr. Sutcliffe preached the sermon in connection with the opening of the British School in Queen Street, kindly granted to the friends meeting in the Temperance Room by the late Mr. Christy, by whom it had been erected.

The County Union Report, ending April, 1839, states that the Rev. T. H. Smith, of Denton, was in the habit of conducting

¹ "Independency in Droylsden," p. 11, by the Rev. C. Bingley.

services at Droylsden ; and the Report for the following year says that a grant had been made at the last annual meeting "in aid of the preaching of the gospel at this place," which had been "continued on Sabbath evenings, and occasionally on week-day evenings throughout the year," supplies coming chiefly from Ashton. In February, 1845, the little flock was scattered in consequence of the managers of the Queen Street room transferring "its use to the recently appointed incumbent of the Established Church in Droylsden ;" but after the lapse of a few Sundays, the old room in Market Street was again rented. On February 20th, 1848, the new schoolroom in King Street was opened for public worship by the Revs. Dr. Massie, of Salford, J. Sutcliffe, and W. W. Essex (Moravian), the cost being about £230, towards which Mr. Abel Buckley, was the largest contributor. For a short time the pulpit was supplied mainly by students from Lancashire College, but in 1852 the Rev. David Wilson, of Winlaton, in Durham, was invited to fill the office of pastor for twelve months. At the end of that term he removed to Ryton, and subsequently to Birstall, near Leeds, where he died, May 23rd, 1864, aged forty-six years. On October 16th, 1853, the Rev. Thomas Sturgess,¹ from Prescott, began his labours in succession to Mr. Wilson, and continued until January, 1857, when he removed to Upper Mill, in Yorkshire. The Rev. Charles Bingley, educated at Airedale, and who had held pastorates at Middlesborough, Crewe, and Tockholes,² near Blackburn, followed, beginning his labours here on August 9th, 1857. On the 21st of October following, a church was duly formed, thirty-nine members being dismissed from the Albion Church, Ashton, for the purpose. The foundation stone of a new chapel, which had long been greatly needed, was laid on Easter Monday, April 25th, 1859, by Mr. Abel Buckley, and on the 23rd of November following the opening services were commenced, when the Revs. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, and J. G. Rogers, B.A., were the preachers. On the following Sunday the Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, conducted service in the morning ; the Rev. H. W. Parkinson, of Rochdale, in the afternoon ; and the Rev. A. Thomson, M.A., of Manchester, in the evening. On the succeeding Tuesday, the Rev.

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

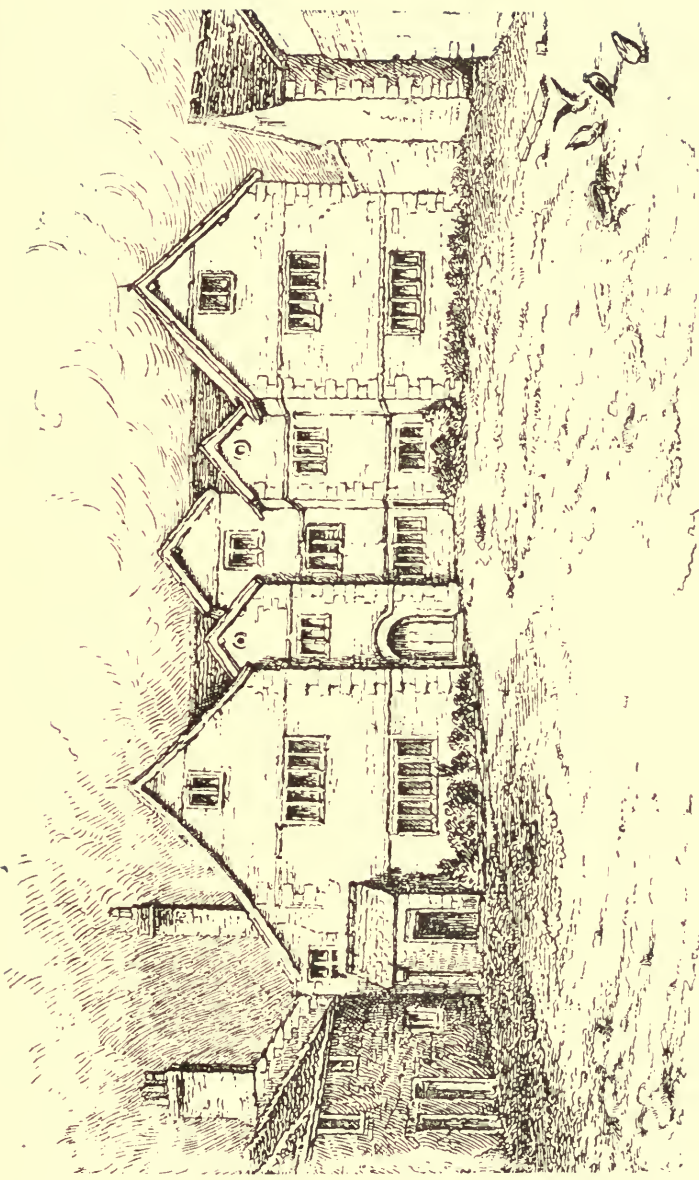
² Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

J. Parker (then of Manchester, now Dr. Parker, of London) preached the "concluding sermon." The cost of the building was about £2,000. It contained accommodation for about 500 people, and the schoolroom underneath for about 400 children. Mr Bingley did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his labours; he died somewhat suddenly on May 30th, 1862, aged forty-nine years, and was interred in the grave-yard of Hope Chapel, Denton. The Rev. A. Cran, M.A., a student from Lancashire College, became his successor in October of 1863. In 1867 the church was able to dispense with financial help from the County Union; and in 1884, important enlargements in both school and chapel were effected, at a cost of £1,750, towards clearing away the debt arising from which, and other objects, a bazaar, held in 1889, realised the handsome sum of £800. The chapel now has sitting accommodation for 700 persons; the church membership stands at 168; the number of scholars and teachers is 452; and Mr. Cran is still the respected pastor.

VII.—STALYBRIDGE AND MOSSLEY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

"As far back as 1818," says the Rev. Richard Slate, "when the ministers of the Manchester District itinerated in the vicinity of Ashton, there was occasional preaching in a cottage at this place."¹ It is, however, to the missionary labours of the Rev. Jonathan Sutcliffe, of Ashton-under-Lyne, that Congregationalism in Stalybridge, as in many other places, is indebted for its origin. In 1827 he began to hold week-night services in private houses, which were continued until 1830, when a chapel was erected in King Street, the pulpit being chiefly supplied by students from Airedale College. The Rev. Giles Hoyle, who had formerly been associated a short time with the Rev. George Greatbatch in his work at Southport, and subsequently had laboured a few years at Milnthorpe, at the request of the Ashton friends took charge of the interest at Stalybridge, in

¹ "History of the Lancashire Congregational Union," p. 70.



STALEY HALL, STALYBRIDGE.

1831. In October of that year, shortly after Mr. Hoyle's settlement, a church was formed, eleven members being transferred from Mr. Sutcliffe's church for the purpose. On Sunday, the 24th of May, 1835, the new chapel in Melbourne Street was opened "with a public prayer meeting at seven o'clock in the morning." The Rev. Richard Fletcher preached in the forenoon from 1 Cor. i., 23; in the afternoon the Rev. J. Sutcliffe from Zech. iv., 6; and in the evening the Rev. W. McKerrow, M.A., of Manchester, from Heb. x., 25. On the following Monday evening Dr. McAll, of Manchester, was the preacher, his text being Rev. xxii., 17. Collections at all the services resulted in the sum of £122. The chapel is described as "neat and commodious," "measuring 45 feet by 50," "built in the Gothic style of architecture." Its cost was about £1,500, "including the enclosing of a large plot of burial ground with the school, which is underneath the chapel, and capable of accommodating 600 children."¹ Mr. Hoyle did not confine himself to the needs of his own church, but found opportunity to conduct periodical services at Blackrock, Pump Street, and Adshead Buildings, Staly, and Mossley. At all these places it is reported that the attendances were usually encouraging, considering the late hour up to which the people had to work, it being nine o'clock in the evening, for instance, before he could commence the service in some of them. In 1842 Mr. Hoyle resigned, having accepted the charge of the Congregational Church at Ancoats, Manchester.² The Rev. F. C. Douthwaite, a student from Airedale College, was Mr. Hoyle's successor, beginning his labours about the end of 1844. His ordination took place on Wednesday, February 5th, 1845, when the Rev. Walter Scott, President of Airedale College, gave the charge to the minister, and Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, preached to the church and congregation. Other ministers assisting were the Revs. R. Calvert, Hyde; J. Sutcliffe, Ashton-under-Lyne; and John Holgate, Orrell. Shortly after his advent the church was able to dispense with pecuniary assistance from the County Union, and the Report ending April, 1845, which records the fact, also says:—

¹ "Evangelical Magazine" for 1835, p. 376.

² Vide ante page 183; also vols. i. and vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

We have made an effort to remove the debt from the chapel, which was upwards of £1,000, and which we are happy to say, by the blessing of God, and the kind aid of the Rev. J. Sutcliffe and his people, and other Christian friends, we have been able to accomplish.

Mr. Douthwaite remained in Stalybridge about three years, and subsequently became the minister of the Congregational Church at Ashton-in-Makerfield.¹ His successor was the Rev. Robert Roberts, who had been educated at Blackburn Academy, and had held pastorates at Bootle, in Cumberland, and Parkgate, Cheshire. He was minister at Stalybridge from 1847 to 1853, and removed to Chipping, near Blackburn, subsequently to East Bergholt, in Suffolk, where he died, February 4th, 1877.² The Rev. J. C. McMichael, educated at Rotherham College, and who had previously been co-pastor to the Rev. Joseph Dyson, of Farnworth, for a few years, began his labours at Stalybridge in October, 1853. He continued until 1855, when he removed to Windsor, and subsequently left England for South Australia, where he is now resident without charge. The next minister was the Rev. J. H. Gwyther, B.A., a student from Lancashire College, who began his labours in 1857. It was during his pastorate that the church took down the old chapel, and erected in its place "the present chaste and much admired building, which contains 1,000 sittings." The cost was £5,000, and it was opened for public worship in 1861. Mr. Gwyther remained until 1869, when he removed to Liscard, in Cheshire, where he still labours.³ In 1870 the Rev. James Williamson, M.A., another Lancashire College student, accepted the call of the church, and remained until 1879. He was subsequently at Withington, where he died in 1887.⁴ The Rev. H. W. Holder, M.A., a third Lancashire College student, held the pastorate from 1880 to 1884. He is now the Registrar of the Victoria University, Owens College, Manchester. The present minister is the Rev. G. E. Cheeseman, educated at Lancashire College, and for seven years pastor of the Congrega-

¹ Vide vol. iv. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

² Vide vol. ii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity," where 1887 is misprinted for 1877.

³ Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

⁴ Vide ante page 71.

tional Church at Hatherlow, Cheshire. He entered upon his duties here in 1885, and still ministers to an attached people. It deserves to be noted that one of the founders of the church was Mr. John Cheetham, for some time M.P. for Salford, and also for one of the divisions of Lancashire. His son, Mr. J. F. Cheetham, was M.P. for one of the divisions of Derbyshire for several years. Connected with the church also was the late Mr. William Summers, for some time M.P. for Stalybridge, and subsequently for Huddersfield, whose early death terminated a life of great promise.

The Congregational Church at Mossley is another monument of the aggressive work of the church at Ashton-under-Lyne, but with its origin must also be associated the names of the Revs. Giles Hoyle, of Stalybridge, and T. H. Smith, of Denton, who were accustomed to hold religious services at Mossley in 1838. "From the origin of the church at Ashton," writes one, "several members of the church came regularly from Mossley, and through their efforts and those of their pastor, the Rev. J. G. Rogers, evangelistic work and Sunday School teaching had not been neglected in that village."¹ For about two years worship was conducted "in a commodious mill room, kindly lent for the purpose by John Mayall, Esq.," and in the spring of 1854 Mr. John Cheetham, M.P., laid the foundation stone of Abney Chapel. The schoolroom in the rear of the chapel, capable of accommodating 900 children, was first ready, and the congregation removed to it in April, 1855. On the 11th of July following the opening services of the chapel were held, when Dr. Raffles was the morning preacher, and Dr. Allon, of London, the evening. On the following Sunday, July 15th, the Rev. J. Sutcliffe conducted the services, and on the 29th a new organ was opened, the preachers being the Revs. J. Thornton, of Stockport, and J. G. Rogers, B.A. The chapel is seated for about 800 persons, and the total expenditure incurred was upwards of £5,000. The first minister was the Rev. Edward Minton. He was born at Ludlow, in Shropshire, in 1818; privately educated; had a charge at Cheltenham, then at Moreton-in-the-Marsh, whence he removed to Mossley in December, 1854. For twenty-three years he laboured successfully here, resigning in 1877 owing to impaired health. He died

¹ "Half a Century of Independency in Ashton-under-Lyne," p. 60.

on Wednesday, January 23rd, 1887. His successor was the Rev. Llewellyn Porter, from Prestwich. He was minister from December, 1877, to June, 1881,¹ The Rev. R. G. Leigh, from Farnworth, followed in May, 1882. He removed in October, 1885, to Hope Chapel, Salford, where he still labours.² In April of the following year the Rev. W. W. Jubb was appointed to fill the vacancy. He was educated at Cavendish College, Manchester; had held pastorates at Oldbury, in Staffordshire, and Bristol; and, previous to his settlement at Mossley, was for some years Secretary of the Irish Evangelical Society. In February, 1891, Mr. Jubb resigned and went to the United States, where he is the pastor of a Congregational church. The present minister is the Rev. J. Campbell, who was educated at Nottingham Institute, and who, previous to his removal to Mossley in November, 1891, had worthily served the church at Delph as minister for seven years. The manse belonging to the church was erected in 1859 at a cost of £800; in 1872, at a cost of £1,326, the school buildings were altered and enlarged, and in the same year the sum of £500 was paid Lord Stamford for the freehold right of land; and in 1885 Mr. George Andrew, J.P., Mayor, opened the Abney New Lecture Room and Infant School, which cost about £600. Connected with the church is a branch school at Micklehurst, which was built in 1875 at a cost of £1,326, and which has accommodation for 200 persons.

¹ Vide ante page 25.

² Vide ante page 221; also vol. iii. of "Lancashire Nonconformity."

NOTES.

PAGE 6.—“Richard Bolton came from Rochdale to Monton. Removed to Walton and Preston in 1773.”—(Raffles MSS.)

PAGE 12.—In 1823 the Rev. John Adamson issued a little pamphlet against the use of instrumental music in Dissenting places of worship. It will interest lovers of music to know, that any Congregational minister within this century should have seriously undertaken to prove the impropriety and harmfulness of its use, and especially should have assigned the following reasons:—

1. Instruments of music were *never used even among the Jews, in the ordinary worship of the Sabbath Day.*

2. When instruments were used by the Jews, in the *worship of God, they were accompanied with sacrifice and dancing.* Hence “advocates for it in the New Testament Churches,” to be consistent, “ought to *dance as well as play.*”

3.—Instrumental music *was neither admitted into the Apostolic Churches, nor into those that succeeded them, for more than seven hundred years.*

4.—Instrumental music in the worship of God *is a custom derived from the idolatrous Church of Rome.*

5.—The Churches which made the greatest progress in reformation, *laid instruments of music entirely aside.*

6.—Instruments of music should never be admitted into a place of worship, because wherever they are admitted they produce a train of the most lamentable evils.

PAGE 14: NOTE 1.—Last line but one, read—“More than doubtful *if* Mr. Chorley was a Unitarian.”

PAGE 36.—The Rev. John Ellis has recently left Blackley, for Uppertorpe, Sheffield.

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“Manchester, February 26th. Last Thursday night about a quarter after eleven o'clock, the Rev. Mr. Nichols, a Dissenting minister, was stopped in the Gate of St. Ann's Churchyard, leading to King Street, by a person who presented a pistol to his breast, and robbed him of five shillings and sixpence. He seemed to be dissatisfied with so small a sum, but Mr. Nichols assuring him that he had no more about him, went off without offering any further violence.”

NOTES.

PAGE 6.—“Richard Bolton came from Rochdale to Monton. Removed to Walton and Preston in 1773.”—(Raffles MSS.)

PAGE 12.—In 1823 the Rev. John Adamson issued a little pamphlet against the use of instrumental music in Dissenting places of worship. It will interest lovers of music to know, that any Congregational minister within this century should have seriously undertaken to prove the impropriety and harmfulness of its use, and especially should have assigned the following reasons:—

1. Instruments of music were *never used even among the Jews, in the ordinary worship of the Sabbath Day.*

2. When instruments were used by the Jews, in the *worship of God, they were accompanied with sacrifice and dancing.* Hence “advocates for it in the New Testament Churches,” to be consistent, “ought to *dance* as well as *play.*”

3.—Instrumental music was *neither admitted into the Apostolic Churches, nor into those that succeeded them, for more than seven hundred years.*

4.—Instrumental music in the worship of God *is a custom derived from the idolatrous Church of Rome.*

5.—The Churches which made the greatest progress in reformation, *laid instruments of music entirely aside.*

6.—Instruments of music should never be admitted into a place of worship, because wherever they are admitted they produce a train of the most lamentable evils.

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PAGE 109.—The following is extracted from a letter of the Rev. John Pye, of Sheffield, to the Rev. Caleb Warhurst, respecting the latter's Ordination Service:—

Sheffield, 1756.

I think I told you in my last that I had wrote to Mr. Scott, desiring a determinate answer respecting your Ordination. He was upon a journey when my letter reached his house, and after his return was more than usually hurried with an important affair which he is just entering upon, and that is the teaching grammar learning to a few young men that are designed for the ministry. But at length he wrote me, that upon my recommendation he was very willing to assist in your ordination, and should choose for old Mr. Walkden to give the charge, and me to preach, and in case we undertook these parts he would open the work, ask the questions, and pray over you. But if Mr. W. rather choose it, he would preach, I might give the charge, and Mr. W. pray over you. Now, as Mr. W. is very far advanced in years I apprehend this last scheme would be best, and most acceptable to the people.

PAGE 109: NOTE 1.—It was my intention to print copious extracts from Caleb Warhurst's diary, but the exigencies of space have prevented. Though of less value for historic purposes than the diaries of Nonconformist ministers belonging to the last century generally are, it deserves publicity.

PAGE 125.—The Rev. William Parkes subsequently served the church at Newington Chapel, Liverpool, for a brief period.—(Vide vol. vi., of "Lancashire Nonconformity").

PAGE 139.—The Rev. Samuel Bradley was greatly interested in instrumental music, and in 1823 an organ was introduced into Mosley Street Chapel which gave great offence to several of his people. He published an address to the Church and Congregation upon the subject, and it was this which led to the strictures of the Rev. John Adamson above referred to.

PAGE 135.—Dr. McAll died unexpectedly after a brief illness on Thursday evening, May 11th, 1893. He was born at Macclesfield, December 17th, 1821. and was, therefore, in his 72nd year. His wife was the daughter of the Rev. D. B. Hayward, one of the early professors of the old Blackburn Academy.

PAGE 183.—The Rev. E. K. Evans died at Chiswick, June 23rd, 1893, aged sixty-two years.

PAGE 193.—The Rev. Thomas Hamer became assistant minister in September 1869, to the Rev. Robert Spence, M.A., of Dundee, formerly of Newington Chapel, Liverpool.—(Vide vol. vi. of "Lancashire Nonconformity"). Mr. Spence died in June of the following year, and the sole responsibility of the church fell upon Mr. Hamer's shoulders. There was on the part of a majority of the church a strong feeling that he should be the permanent pastor, but a friendly minority thought a church of over 400 members, and a congregation of 1000 too heavy a burden for so young a man. Mr. Hamer agreed with the opinion of the minority and refused to allow his name to come before the church, settling subsequently at Cheetham Hill.

PAGE 202.—The Rev. J. R. Thomson, M.A., is "starred" in the Congregational Year Book as a minister resident in London without charge. This led to his being so described in Vol. III. of this work, whereas he is, and has been for many years, one of the respected tutors of New College, London. Surely some other description of him, and such as he, ought to be given in the Year Book.

PAGE 223.—For "P. N. Ford," read "P. C. Ford."

PAGE 227.—For "Rev. D. W. Jordan, B.A.," read "Rev. D. N. Jordan, B.A."

PAGE 236.—Dr. Raffles gives the following information respecting the Rev. James Burgess, of Oldham:—

"He was a very evangelical and faithful preacher, and from his knowledge of medicine was very useful in every way in the neighbourhood. He continued at Delph about 13 years and died at a place called Medge Grove."

PAGE 236.—The Rev. James Burgess, son of the Rev. James Burgess, of Oldham, was minister for many years at Whitworth, near Rochdale. Extracts from several of his letters are to be found in the MS. collection of the late Dr. Raffles, one of which is here given. Unfortunately the exact date does not appear upon it, but it was written shortly before his death, which took place in May, 1804. It gets additional interest from the fact that it was sent to Mr. Arthur Clegg, whose name is prominent in the early history of Manchester Congregationalism.—(Vide ante page. 110, note 1, 138).

“Dear Sir,—Ever since you gave your friendly and beneficial assistance in the sale of my timber at Millhouses, I have retained a grateful sense of the greatness of the favour, and the cheerful manner in which you confer'd it; have also waited for an opportunity of making something more than a mere verbal acknowledgment of it. Consequently I herewith send you, gratuitously, some small fruit of my ministerial labours since declining nature and a thorn in the flesh disabled me for stated pulpit work. As my life has been prolonged, and my faculties continued in some degree far beyond what I or any of my acquaintances expected, and finding that the spiritual life within has not, in this last period of my life, decay'd with the decays of my outward man, but rather the contrary, I have been as diligent in my good Master's work (according to my lesser abilities), as I was when I had a whole flock of Christ's sheep to tend and feed. When my lips and lungs failed me, both head, heart, and hand have been for the most part employed in the delightful work of the ministry. And tho' after I retired into private life I have often been solicited to strike into trade, I could never reconcile my unwilling mind to it, much less to resemble my successor at Hatherloe, who I find has made shift to join the sacred calling of a minister, with the worldly calling of a cotton tradesman, tho' he has no child. But indeed religion, I am informed, was very low at Hatherloe. During my ministry there we had a very full congregation of hearers, besides four prayer meetings of men, and one of women. But the introduction of instrumental music, which had neither the New Testament precept nor precedent to recommend it, threw the congregation into confusion, and drove away their minister, and, I believe, a general deadness and diminution succeeded, &c. The Exposition and Silent Meditations which you were so good as to subscribe for, have all, excepting three or four, soon passed off. The like quick sale my next piece had. What will be the fate of this, my last publication, which I now make a present of to you, time will discover, but not during my own lifetime. For, excepting a few sent to the printer of the *Evangelical Magazine*, at London, and to two shops in your town, the chief part are to be reserved to the time of my interment, when a smallish number are to be given by way of Dole to the pious poor of those congregations where I oftenest officiated during my ministry. I shall only add that, this my last piece has now an addition which is not in any of those few already sent to booksellers, indeed it was not added before last week. It bears this title: “A prospect of near approaching death prompts the author to gird on his Christian armour. That part I lately transcribed from my Diary of Experiences, which I have kept above 50 years.” As now I find both head and hand fail me in writing (which I need not wonder at, because in my 80th year), I must abruptly conclude, &c.

February 19.

J. BURGESS.

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